BLENNERHASSETT

A ROMANCE

BY

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN

Emma Stanley Cook

666 Post St.,

San Francisco

Calif.

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BLENNERHASSETT

OR

THE DECREES OF FATE

A ROMANCE Founded Upon Events of American History

BY

CHARLES FELTON PIDGIN

Author of
"Quincy Adams Sawyer and Mason's Corner Folks."

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TO THE MEMORY OF

Theodosia Burr Alston,

THE DAUGHTER OF

AARON BURR,

WHO, IN A LETTER TO HER FATHER, WROTE:

"I witness your extraordinary fortitude with new wonder at every new misfortune. Often, after reflecting on this subject, you appear to me so superior, so elevated above all other men, I contemplate you with such a strange mixture of humility, admiration, reverence, love, and pride, that very little superstition would be necessary to make me worship you as a superior being, such enthusiasm does your character excite in me. When I afterward revert to myself, how insignificant do my best qualities appear. My vanity would be greater if I had not been placed so near you; and yet my pride is our relationship. I had rather not live than not be the daughter of such a man.——"

WHICH WORDS HAVE RENDERED HER CONSPICUOUS

AMONG THE WOMEN OF AMERICA FOR FILIAL DEVOTION,

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FOR a hundred years, one of the most remarkable of Americans has borne a weight of obloquy and calumny such as has been heaped upon no other man, and, unlike any other man, during his lifetime he never by voice or pen made answer to charges made against him, or presented either to friends or foes any argument or evidence to refute them.

The American public makes idols of its great men; but when from any cause those great men fall from their high estates, the American public has no mercy for its fallen heroes.

I will not speak longer in general terms, of uncertain application, but declare at once that the remarkable man I have in mind is AARON BURR: a man who fought bravely to secure the independence of the Colonies; a man who rose to the highest position at the bar, and who was offered a seat upon the bench; a man who was elected to the highest position in the gift of the American people, and who filled the second place with a dignity and grace that have never been equalled; a man who revenged the wrongs inflicted upon him during a period of thirty years, on the fatal field at Weehawken; a man who contemplated a conquest, and who was tried for high treason by the members of the party which afterwards carried out exactly the programme of conquest that he had outlined; a man who bore his downfall with patience and dignity; a man whom neither political persecution, nor poverty, nor the perfidy of his friends could force to speak one word of recrimination or complaint; a man who bore the loss of daughter and grandson, the dearest ties that bound him to the human race, with resignation; a man who for twenty-five years thereafter toiled on without complaint to supply the means for an humble living; a man who, although he killed his foe according to the rules of the code of honor then in force, has been called either assassin or murderer by the makers of school-books, thus instilling into infant minds a prejudice which only research and study in after years could effectually remove.

For twenty years I have read about this man. There is no American about whom so much has been written, and within the pages of a book like this I can only hope to incorporate its spirit, for the substance would fill volumes. Where the statement was one of fact, fact has been adhered to. Where the language is imaginative such words have been chosen to express fiction as seemed to conform to those used to convey fact; in other words, if the characters in this romance did not do the things or say the words attributed to them, from what they did do or say, it seems fair and proper to infer that they would have done or said them had occasion offered, or circumstances been propitious.

The men of America to-day are more tolerant, broader-minded, and less bigoted in their politics than they were a century ago. My aim has been to present Aaron Burr as he was a hundred years ago, and to ask that he be judged by the rules of order and society then existing; but, by minds free from the intolerant political and religious prejudices which blinded the eyes and warped the judgments of his contemporaneous critics.

The diamond gives no indication of its worth until it has been ground and polished and set in a manner worthy of its value. It may have happened in the past that some of our public men have been placed in settings worthy of a richer jewel, but this surely has not been the case with Aaron Burr. If my labors of twenty years should place him before his fellow men in a better light, if, while regretting and condemning his faults, they obtain a fuller and more truthful idea of his virtues, accomplishments, and powers, I shall feel amply rewarded.

As regards the statement made in Chapter XXXVII (page 421), concerning the illegal conjugal relationship of Harman Blennerhassett and Margaret Agnew, I desire to say that the fact was in my possession long before the completion of this volume. As stated, however, the person supplying the information exacted a promise from me that I would not make it public unless the disclosure was first made by some member of the family. Such a disclosure having appeared in a recent number of a periodical, I have felt that the ban of secrecy was thereby removed.

C. F. P.

NANTUCKET, MASS.,
July, 1901.

BLENNERHASSETT

OR

THE DECREES OF FATE

The Prologue .... Four Pictures

CHAPTER I

A DEN OF TREASON

"ORDERLY, present my compliments to Captain Claiborne, and say to him that I wish to see him immediately."

The messenger saluted and withdrew.

The speaker was a man, apparently about forty-five years of age, who sat at a large table. He was attired in the undress uniform of a general in the army of the United States, and had evidently been engaged for a long time in writing letters, for many closely-written sheets lay upon the table before him.

The time was one of the earlier years in the last century. The place was a rude fort which stood upon the eastern bank of the Father of Waters, in what was then called the Mississippi Territory.

The fortification was in reality nothing more than a stockade roughly built of logs. It might have served well as a means of defense in case of an attack by In-

dians, but could have made only a short resistance if subjected to the fire of modern ordnance, considering as modern what was in use a century ago.

In the centre of the area enclosed by the stockade, stood a log-house one story in height, containing two rooms. Each of these rooms had two windows with the small panes of glass in use at that time.

The door opened and Captain Claiborne entered. He saluted his superior officer, and, as the latter motioned to him to take a chair beside him he said, "Good morning, General. I am at your service."

The term "General" was not misapplied, for the person so addressed was General James Wilkinson, the commander-in-chief of the army of the United States.

"I am going to ask you," began the General, "a question of a somewhat delicate nature. I trust you will not be offended, but if the proposed inquiry touches your private affairs too closely, I shall not be offended if you decline to answer."

The Captain looked up with an inquiring expression upon his face. As the General did not proceed, he finally said, "You pique my curiosity, General."

"As you do not forbid the inquiry," remarked the General, "I shall consider your somewhat vague remark as permission to proceed."

The Captain gave a slight nod, but said nothing.

"My dear Captain, how are you situated financially? In other words, does your pay enable you to live as you would like to live?"

"Far from it," answered the Captain. "To make you understand my position fully, I must explain. I am an only son, and my father, who was a cotton planter, supposed that I would succeed him in the management of the estate, but I took no interest in tilling the soil and thrashing negroes, and spent most of my time until I was of age in horse-back riding and in pay-

ing attentions to the young ladies in the vicinity. My father, finding that I was to be of no practical benefit to him, engaged an overseer, and I determined to enter the army. Within the past few years, the estate has become unproductive and I have been obliged to send home the greater part of my pay to support my father and mother, for, despite my other faults, I am not lacking in filial devotion."

"I am much interested in your recital," remarked the General.

The Captain continued, "To add to my burden my only sister, whom we all supposed was most advantageously married, lost her husband, and about a year ago returned home with her child, and, of course, her support has devolved upon me."

"How little the world knows," said the General, "about its modest heroes who bear such burdens uncomplainingly and show no envy towards those who are more fortunately situated from a worldly point of view."

The Captain bowed to show his appreciation of the implied compliment.

"The story that you have told me," said the General, "renders it easy for me to make a proposition to you. I should not have felt warranted in doing so if your financial situation was of a more satisfactory nature. The fact is, Captain," and his voice sank almost to a whisper, "I am not above making a little money myself outside of the meagre compensation which I receive from our respected and honored Government. I am interested in some tobacco plantations in Kentucky, but, as you know, the fact that the Spanish control the mouth of the Mississippi has prevented our planters from securing a ready market for their products without paying an exorbitant customs duty to the Spanish authorities. But on account of the position that I hold," and at this point he assumed a still more confidential

manner, "I have been able to make arrangements with the Spanish Governor of Louisiana by which the boats loaded with my produce are allowed to go down to New Orleans on payment of a merely nominal duty."

Captain Claiborne was much interested in this disclosure, but he did not think it best to manifest his interest openly. The part that he was to play in this transaction had not been disclosed to him and he thought that his best course was to await further developments.

They soon came. "Of course," continued the General, "it is impossible for me to go to New Orleans with these boats, which will reach here within the next twenty-four hours, and transact the necessary business with the Spanish authorities. I must have some one to act in my stead; that person must be one whom I can trust implicitly. He must have both assurance and tact and must transact the business in such a way as to divert all suspicion from me. To such a person, if he can be found, I am willing to pay three per cent of the price received for the produce and bear all his traveling expenses."

"I will not ask you to speak more plainly, General," said Captain Claiborne. "If performing this service for you will not compromise my position in the army, as I said when I came in, I am at your service."

The General smiled. "I thought I was a good judge of human nature, Captain, and I find that I have not been mistaken in you. I am going to write a letter of introduction to Governor Miro, which you can take with you, and, by the way, Claiborne, if you can induce the Governor to reduce the duty from fifteen to ten per cent I will give you one-half of the abatement."

"I will do my best," responded the Captain.

He thought for a moment, and, looking up suddenly, exclaimed, "What would the President say if he knew about this business of ours?"

That he was disposed to be a willing tool of his superior officer in his commercial ventures will be readily inferred from the promptness with which he spoke of the proposed venture as "ours."

"Oh, I am all right with the President," said the General. "I understand Jefferson and he understands me. I think he is the right man in the right place, and I have reason to believe that he has the same opinion of your humble servant."

"I never took any interest in politics," remarked Captain Claiborne. "I voted for Jefferson, because, naturally, following the teachings of my father, I never had much sympathy with the political sentiments which are uppermost in the New England States."

"Jefferson is all right," remarked the General. "His great political principle is to secure all possible rights to the common people. Hamilton and his sympathizers worship a lord or anything that looks like one, while Jefferson and his followers adore the Man—the ordinary, common man. Jefferson has engraven on his watch seal the same inscription that Oliver Cromwell had on his—'Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God,' but I think," continued the General with a laugh, "history shows that obedience to tyrants is usually more profitable than resistance."

"You will excuse my ignorance," remarked the Captain, "but did the President take a prominent part in the Revolution?"

"In some ways, yes," replied the General. "He formed the committee of correspondence—that is, the leading men in the thirteen colonies wrote letters to each other, advising resistance to British rule. Then Jefferson printed a pamphlet defending the inalienable rights of British subjects, which so incensed the royal governor, Lord Dunmore, that he tried to arrest him, swearing that if he got hold of him he would hang him to the nearest tree, but the to-be rebellious colonists did

not pay much attention to British threats in those days.

"Of course you know," continued the General, "that Jefferson was chairman of the committee which drew up the Declaration of Independence. From that time to this the United States has showered its favors thick upon him. He was first a member of Congress, then Secretary of State under Washington. Of course they did not agree, for Federalists and Democratic-Republicans won't mingle any more than oil and water.

"While minister to France, he was supposed to have imbibed ultra-French Jacobin principles. The northern people, especially those of New England, anticipated that all the horrors of the French Revolution would be revived in this country if Jefferson were elected President, but so far, I think, he has gone on in a very conservative way and has shown particularly good judgment in the selection of his subordinates."

As he said this, Captain Claiborne averted his face to hide a smile.

The General ruminated for a moment, then he continued, "Jefferson was never a fighter. I had almost forgotten to tell you that when he was Governor of Virginia the notorious Colonel Tarleton gave him little official ease. He was driven from pillar to post and narrowly escaped capture on several occasions. He was Vice-President with that irascible old Federalist, John Adams, and from all I hear, the two had a cat and dog life until the choleric old Massachusetts politician was defeated in 1800."

"I am much obliged to you," said Captain Claiborne, "for so much interesting information concerning the gentleman whose favorable opinion of our services is of so much importance to us."

As he said this, he arose and walked towards the door.

"I expect the boats to-morrow," remarked the Gen-

eral. "In the meantime, I will prepare your letter of introduction and full instructions."

Both officers saluted, and a moment later the General was alone.

He took up his quill and wrote steadily for a long time, throwing the sheets to one side as he rapidly finished them. Upon the last of these the ink was not dry, so he took the sand-box and carefully sprinkled those that were still wet. His task completed, he sat back in his chair, dropped his head upon his hand, and remained for a long time in deep thought. Then he took up the letters one at a time and ran them over hastily.

The first was to a Mr. John Graham, who, it appeared from the language used in the letter, was a confidential agent of the United States government, engaged upon secret service, and who made his reports directly to the President.

Mr. Graham was requested to inform the President that the writer was confident matters were progressing in a way that would be entirely satisfactory to the chief executive. He was using his influence to prevent the intriguing agents of Spain from making any headway in their efforts to induce the citizens of Kentucky and Tennessee to refuse to join the American Union, and, instead, to cast their fortunes with New Spain. On the other hand, he was presenting a strong intimation of military preparations to the Spanish Governor of Louisiana and was assuring him that the present situation could not long continue; and that Spain would eventually be obliged to open the Mississippi River to free navigation.

To two persons in Kentucky, evidently friends from the familiar manner in which they were addressed, he wrote in a somewhat different strain. In these letters the gentlemen were informed that everything was progressing as they wished; that the Spanish governor

would grant concessions to a few representative men in Kentucky and Tennessee, which would allow them to send their produce to New Orleans on payment of a moderate duty. As soon as it was generally known throughout these States that such privileges could be obtained, it would undoubtedly lead these parties to see that their commercial interests and future prosperity depended upon an alliance with Spain rather than with the States on the eastern side of the mountains. "Everything goes well," said he, "Governor Miro and myself understand each other perfectly."

The fourth letter was to the Spanish Governor of Louisiana, whose name was Miro. It informed that gentleman that affairs were coming to a climax in Kentucky and Tennessee; that every day was raising up new advocates for a union with Spain, for his friends could see that their future prosperity depended upon such an alliance. The writer took occasion in the course of his letter to state that His Catholic Majesty, King of Spain, had no more devoted adherent than himself, but he incidentally remarked that at the present time he was somewhat embarrassed financially and that he trusted the quarterly compensation of five hundred dollars allowed him by His Majesty for services rendered would soon be forthcoming, as it was now long overdue. He added that this letter would be delivered by one of his staff, who would be in charge of some boats containing tobacco that he had purchased on credit. It would be evident, of course, he continued, to the Governor, that a low rate of duty on the same would help him financially, and he trusted that the Governor would give his representative every possible opportunity to dispose of the cargo and return with the proceeds at the earliest possible moment.

It is evident from a perusal of the letters referred to, that General Wilkinson was serving two masters, was paid by both and was faithless to each. The contents

indicated a strange condition of military and political affairs in the United States in the early part of the nineteenth century, for the general in command of its army is found to be engaged in a treasonable correspondence and at the same time sends one of his officers as an emissary to carry out a part of his treasonable plot.

CHAPTER II

A SHRINE OF LIBERTY

THE light from the great candelabrum fell upon the wine in the glass and cast a blood-red shadow upon the damask tablecloth beneath. The wineglass was lifted high above his head and the holder uttered in French the sentiment, "To the memory of those brave Frenchmen who died in defence of liberty, and to secure the preservation of human rights."

As those words, spoken in an impassioned manner, fell from the lips of the speaker, his hearers arose to their feet with one accord and the toast was drunk standing. The guests resumed their seats. The gentleman who responded to the toast also spoke in French, and gave a dramatic recital of those terrible events, which, some years before, had taken place in the fair land of France and had been followed by that Reign of Terror, at the contemplation of which the whole civilized world had stood aghast. The sentiments of the after-dinner orator were loudly applauded and it was evident that the minds of his auditors were in full accord with the sentiments which he expressed. But to this apparent unanimity there was one notable exception. A gentleman who sat at the right hand of the host had not arisen when the toast was proposed, and the wine remained untasted in his glass.

The occasion was a merry dinner party given by the owner of the old colonial mansion, known as Richmond Hill, to some of his New York friends and to some

visitors from France who were his guests while in this country.

At the head of the table sat a man small in stature and slight in figure, but with a face finely cut and almost classic in its mold. From beneath his eyebrows gleamed a pair of remarkable eyes: one moment bright and piercing; the next, influenced by sympathy, full of a deep and tender light. No matter how they might look at the beholder, the latter could not but acknowledge their beauty, and ineffectually try to withstand the fire or charm of them. His hair, brushed backward, disclosing a very wide forehead, was shaped at the back into a peruke. His coat, cut in the fashion of a century ago, was of black velvet, as was also his long waistcoat above which was seen a ruffled shirt-front, while similar ruffles adorned the wrists. The knee-breeches were also of black velvet, the stockings of black silk, while upon the tops of his low shoes he wore the silver buckles which were considered so appropriate and fashionable by our ancestors.

At the other end of the table, placed in an armchair, could be seen a portrait of a young and beautiful woman, the daughter of the house. One could easily infer from this that the one of whom it was a counterfeit presentment was unable to be present, and that the father had placed it there so that he could look upon the picture if not upon the face he loved so well.

The host was Aaron Burr, Vice-President of the United States. The oil painting was that of his daughter Theodosia, wife of Joseph Alston of South Carolina, destined at a future day to become governor of that State.

Toast after toast was proposed and each was followed by an appropriate speech.

The conversation during the enjoyment of the sumptuous repast which had preceded the time devoted

to toasts and speechmaking was largely in French; spirited, bright, witty one moment, scientific the next, touching upon literary matters, then upon music or art, and then suddenly descending, or rising, into badinage.

It was midnight before the convivial party dispersed to their homes, carrying with them pleasant memories of a most enjoyable evening.

Colonel Burr, after their departure, invited his guests from France, Colonel DeVigny and M. Romaine, to accompany him to his library. There cordials, *eau-de-vie,* and cigars were served, and conversation was prolonged far into the morning hours.

"You have a fine estate here, Colonel Burr," said Colonel DeVigny. "I notice that your grounds are splendidly laid out, and the river view is magnificent."

"Yes," assented Burr; "yes, before I had sufficient money to buy it I used to come and look at it, and wonder whether I should ever become wealthy enough to own it."

"Such a house must have an interesting history connected with it," remarked M. Romaine. "I should be delighted to hear them, if you can give us the particulars."

"In order that you may fully understand," replied Burr, "I must go back quite a period of time.

"In the days of old New York, in what was then the centre of the city, near which Canal Street is now located, was a large fresh-water pond. At certain seasons of the year this pond became stagnant and the effluvia which arose therefrom caused much annoyance to those living near the pond and much sickness in their families.

"Finally, Peter Rutgers offered to fill in the pond if the city would give him the land covered with water, amounting to about seventy acres. This was agreed to. Rutgers never derived any pecuniary benefit from

this transaction, but from it a great fortune fell to Leonard Lispenard, who, later, married his daughter."

"M. Rutgers was fortunate in having a daughter so as to keep the money in the family," remarked Colonel DeVigny.

Colonel Burr smiled, and continued: "The land that had been filled in was known as the Lispenard Meadows. On the western side, near the Hudson River, were two small elevations or hills on one of which this house was erected." Burr lighted a fresh cigar, then continued his story.

"During the siege of New York by the British, in 1776, General Washington made this house his headquarters. Near the river, on what is now a part of this estate, stood a public house kept by an Englishman, who was allowed to continue his business under strict surveillance by the military guard. Despite their vigilance a plot was hatched there, having for its object the abduction of General Washington, it being the opinion of the British military authorities that with his capture the Rebellion would fall to pieces."

"And how was the plot frustrated?" cried M. Romaine, evidently greatly interested.

"By a peculiar chain of circumstances," Burr responded. "I was aide-de-camp on the staff of General Israel Putnam, whose headquarters were located at No. 1 Broadway in this city. A young English girl, not more than fourteen years of age, named Margaret Moncrieffe, the daughter of a British colonel, was held by us as hostage and was ordered by General Washington to reside in General Putnam's family. I became convinced that she was conveying intelligence to the enemy and I wrote a letter to General Washington informing him of my suspicions. By his orders, she was at once sent out of the city. The chain of circumstances was followed up and it was discovered that the mayor of the city, who was a Tory, and Governor

Tryon, the British commander, who made his headquarters on board the Duchess of Gordon, a British man-of-war lying below here in the river, were implicated in the plot."

"And were you publicly thanked by the commander-in-chief?" asked DeVigny.

"Not by name," said Burr, somewhat abruptly, and he thought of the manner in which his name had been coupled with that of the young lady in question.

Without waiting for further inquiries upon that point, he resumed his story.

"It was in this house that John Adams resided while he was Vice-President of the United States. From that time until I purchased it I am not acquainted with the names or social position of its occupants."

"We are much indebted to you for this interesting knowledge," said M. Romaine, and Colonel Burr assured his guests that it had been a pleasure to supply the information.

"But who was that gentleman," asked Colonel DeVigny, "who left his wine untasted and who evidently found our sentiments of sympathy with the French Republic incompatible with those maintained by himself?"

"That was General Alexander Hamilton, one of our great political leaders, and a prominent member of the New York bar," Burr responded.

"What kind of man is he?" inquired M. Romaine. "I mean, is he American born or is he an Englishman who has made this his adopted country?"

"You have hit very near the truth," Burr replied. "I make it a rule not to speak to my own countrymen about my political opponents or legal antagonists, but, as you are strangers here, I will make an exception in your case, only premising that the gentleman concerning whom you have inquired is my most determined opponent both in politics and at the bar."

"Pray excuse us," said DeVigny. "for touching upon so personal a matter. M. Romaine will join me, I know, in absolving you from the necessity of a reply."

"I shall only tell you the good that I know of him," replied Burr. "What I know to his detriment I shall not tell you, for I have no right to make you parties in my personal quarrels."

"I shall be greatly pleased," said M. Romaine, "if you will tell us about this man. We have heard of him in France. We saw how he acted last evening when that toast was proposed. Our previous opinion of him, and his action, are of the same nature."

"I will answer your question," began Colonel Burr, "in relation to General Hamilton's birthplace by saying that he was born in the British West Indies. It is said that his mother, who was of French extraction, married a Danish gentleman to please her family; but the union was not a happy one and they separated. She afterwards became the wife of a native of Scotland named David Hamilton."

"She was divorced from her first husband?" asked M. Romaine.

"I do not know," replied Colonel Burr, "but if she were not, I do not think that the fact should be used to the detriment of General Hamilton."

This politely worded but decided rebuff was evidently felt by both of his guests.

Burr continued: "When very young, Hamilton was sent by some of his friends in the Island of St. Christopher to the United States to obtain an education, they defraying his expenses. His sympathies were quickly aroused in favor of the struggling colonists and at the age of seventeen, as the story goes, he delivered a patriotic speech in this city which attracted great attention and was afterwards printed and circulated throughout the colonies."

"Mr. Hamilton is much older than you are, is he not?" inquired DeVigny.

"Oh, no," Burr replied. "He is about a year younger than I am. We were about the same age when we entered the Continental army, but I went with General Benedict Arnold to attempt the capture of Quebec, while Hamilton, who had attracted the attention of General Washington, was made aide-de-camp on his staff."

"I presume you are not military rivals," said Colonel DeVigny.

"He had the ear of the commander-in-chief, an advantage which I did not possess," said Burr simply.

Then he went on. "I presume General Hamilton would allow that he rendered greater service to his adopted country by his pen and his voice than by his sword, but I know it should be said in justice to him that he would gladly have exchanged his duties as a military clerk for active service in the field."

"How did he obtain his title of General?" queried M. Romaine.

"He had a slight personal misunderstanding with General Washington," said Burr, "and resigned his position. He returned to New York and married a Miss Schuyler, thus becoming connected with one of the oldest, wealthiest, and most influential families in the State. Just before the final campaign in Virginia, Washington gave him an independent command and he took part in the battle of Yorktown, where by the aid of our French brothers-in-arms we broke the English power and secured the independence of the colonies."

"But his public service did not end with the army?" asked Colonel DeVigny.

"By no means," replied Burr. "He took a very prominent part in the formation of the Constitution under the provisions of which our present government

is conducted. The Constitution as adopted, however, as he has said many times in public and in his writings, was not what he desired. He wished to make our government a strong one like that of England, only a better one."

"Does he believe in the people?" asked M. Romaine.

"I must confess I do not think he does, in the same sense as we do," replied Colonel Burr. "He wanted a strong central government, with a Senate composed of the wealthy land owners, approaching in its character the English House of Lords."

"Yes!" cried M. Romaine, "and with such a government how easy it would be in time to over-ride the people and make the President a King and the Senate a House of Lords in true reality. Ah! I believe your M. Hamilton does not love the common people and that is the reason he would not drink the toast. But do the common people love him?"

"I think General Hamilton would agree with me when I say," remarked Burr, "that they do not. He has held important positions in the government by appointment, but the people have never signified any desire on their part to make him President or Vice-President, or to elect him to a seat in either branch of our national legislature."

"That is where your people are wise," cried M. Romaine.

He filled a small glass with brandy and drank it. "I would not trust that M. Hamilton," he said, raising his voice. "I have no doubt that his innermost wish was for a king and an order of nobility. He may have wished to become your King Alexander, or perhaps he would have been satisfied to be the Duke of—what you call it—New York. Your M. Hamilton believes in the divine right of kings. So will I, if you will allow that the people also have a divine right to

depose those kings who do not rule their people well. That is what we do in France. We have done it before. We may have to do it again."

Burr looked towards DeVigny. The glance was understood.

"Come, M. Romaine," cried the Colonel, "we have imposed upon the kindness of our host too long already. It is nearly morning. We will not kill any more kings until after we have had some sleep."

At this sally all laughed, and Richmond Hill, which for the nonce had been made a shrine of liberty from the French Republican point of view, relapsed into quiet about an hour before the sun sent its rays above the eastern horizon to herald the approach of another day.

CHAPTER III

A SOUTHERN HOME

"GAMP!" The odd sounding word or name rang out loud and clear on the morning air.

The word was spoken by a young and very handsome colored girl who sat on the lower step of the veranda which surrounded the long, low, rambling structure built in the southern style of a century ago. She had been reading a small primer in which she was very much interested, when, looking up, her eye caught a sight which had caused her to utter the exclamation.

"Gamp! Gamp! Come back here."

The little boy to whom the words were addressed did not stop, but continued to run as fast as his little feet could carry him down the long path which led to the road. He was not more than two years of age, but there were in his face even at that tender age evidences of spirit and determination, which, when viewed by themselves, made him appear much older.

The little fellow stopped suddenly and picked up a small branch of a tree that lay in his path, then he continued his flight from the arms of his nurse. Suddenly he stopped again. A pet goat, diminutive in size, and known by the name of "Dickie," had noticed his approach and lowering his head advanced playfully towards him. But the boy did not turn and run for safety, as the average child would have done. Instead, he grasped the stick with both hands and rained blows

so thick and fast upon the head of the astonished animal that the latter turned and fled precipitately.

The boy, flushed by his exertions and evidently determined to more thoroughly castigate his late opponent, started in pursuit. But he had not advanced far before a strong arm was thrown about his waist and he was lifted bodily into the air. Thus thwarted, he struck right and left with his weapon, screamed lustily to be put down, and kicked vigorously in order to escape from the grasp of Penelope, the nurse, who had run down the path with the speed of a deer, to rescue her beloved charge from what she supposed to be imminent danger.

Despite his cries and struggles, Penelope bore him back in triumph to the house. As she approached it, the front door was opened and a young man and woman came out upon the veranda.

"What is the matter, Penelope? What has happened to Gamp?"

"Nothing bad, Missus," said the girl, as she placed the little boy upon the ground.

Then she proceeded to give her mistress an account of the little boy's combat with the goat.

During the recital the boy advanced and clung to his mother's dress, having forgotten apparently both the conflict and his determined opposition to being prevented from renewing it.

The young mother smiled and taking her child in her arms kissed him tenderly and then held him up to receive a similar testimonial of affection from the fond father, after which she told the nurse to take him into the house.

The mansion, for everybody who lived in the country in those days of long ago occupied a mansion, stood upon an eminence surrounded by mighty oak trees from which it took its name "The Oaks." In the distance could be seen the quarters of the slaves who

tilled the rice plantations which stretched in every direction as far as the eye could reach and which the owner considered to be worth two hundred thousand guineas or more than a million dollars of our present money.

The young man was fine looking and evinced the attributes of good birth and social refinement. There was an alert look in his eye and an expression of firmness in the mouth and chin which showed that he was perfectly competent to manage successfully the affairs of his large estate and to take a high, if not a leading position, among his neighbors in social and political matters.

The young woman's face was beautiful, not because it possessed simply those features which make a face handsome, but because in the expression of the eye and the general outline of the face there was that evidence of education, intellectuality, and spirituality, the combination of which alone can make a woman truly beautiful.

After Penelope, with the little boy in her arms, had entered the house the mother referred to the incident which had just taken place.

"Gamp is just like his grandfather, he seems to have no sense of fear."

"I hope," replied her husband, "that he will always be afraid to do wrong."

"In which case," said the young mother proudly, looking up into her husband's face, "he will resemble both his father and grandfather."

Her companion smiled at the compliment, but, thinking that this was an inadequate return for so delicately worded a tribute, he caught her in his arms, kissed her, and then looked earnestly and admiringly into her beautiful face. The face was the same as that shown in the oil painting which stood in the armchair at Richmond Hill. She was Theodosia Burr Alston, daughter of Aaron Burr. The young man was her

husband, Joseph Alston. The little boy was Aaron Burr Alston, the grandson of the Vice-President. When he had first learned to talk, the word "grandfather" had been transformed into "Gamp," and the doting grandparent, whose future hopes were centered in his daughter's child, accepted with pleasure the childish title conferred upon him, and in turn addressed his grandson as "Gampillo" or "Gampillus."

A rustic seat which stood upon the veranda looked inviting and Mr. and Mrs. Alston accepted the mute invitation.

"When did you hear from your father last?"

"Yesterday," was the reply. "He wrote me at great length, giving a full account of the coming campaign in New York. He seems very confident that he will be able to overcome the combined efforts of his opponents and secure his election as governor."

"Did he make any mention in his letter of either Hamilton or Jefferson?"

"I don't think he did. You know he rarely ever refers in his letters to his opponents. I will go and get the letter so that you can read it. It came late yesterday afternoon and you know we had company in the evening, and it was so late when we retired."

"No apologies are needed, my dear Theodosia. I know you have no secrets from me and I have none from you. That is the reason why I am going to improve the present opportunity and tell you something that has been on my mind ever since your father decided to enter this contest."

"I hope it is nothing serious," said the young wife, a slight look of alarm manifesting itself upon her expressive face.

"It may or may not be serious," her husband replied. "You say your father seldom, if ever, refers to his opponents in his letters. I wish he would give them more attention. I mean, I wish he would pay

more attention to the plots and counterplots of his enemies."

"What do you mean, Joseph?" cried his wife. "Am I to understand from what you say that anyone is plotting against my father?"

"I am afraid so. I think, from the day your father and Thomas Jefferson received the same number of votes for the office of president, that two mighty forces have been working against him, not in active and understood co-operation, but each force working in its own way to secure a common end, and that end the defeat of your father's political aspirations."

"And from whom does this opposition come?" she asked, now thoroughly aroused by her husband's words.

"As I said, from two sources. One springs from President Jefferson, who knows that your father, if he succeeds in his effort to be elected governor of New York, will be a rival to be greatly feared in the next presidential campaign. I may be deceived in the man, but I think Jefferson will carry on his warfare manfully and above-board as they say; but I have a different opinion of his other antagonist."

"Whom do you mean?"

"I mean the man who has been his rival in the field, in politics, and at the bar, for nearly thirty years."

"General Hamilton?" she cried; "why father and he are the best of friends."

"Apparently so, I agree. I think your father considers that General Hamilton is honest in his opposition and would do nothing underhand to injure him, but I have not the same confidence in General Hamilton. When I was last in New York I met many of your father's political friends. They told me many things which they said they dared not mention to him, because he would never converse with them about his

enemies. He only cared for the opinions of his friends. They entreated me to either write to him or have a talk with him, and call his attention to certain matters that were going on, so as to put your father on his guard."

"And have you done so?"

"Not yet, Theodosia. I have been thinking what would be the best way in which to present the matter most forcibly to your father's attention."

"And have you come to any conclusion?"

"Yes, I have decided that it would be better for you to write to him than for me."

"I do not agree with you, Joseph. If I should write to him anything against General Hamilton, I know his reply would contain the most terrible scolding that I have ever had in my life. He would tell me to attend to my home affairs and not interfere in politics. I never could understand why I should not engage in politics, when my father has so kindly opened every other avenue of advancement to me."

"It may be as you say, Theodosia. But if you are sure to get a scolding for writing to him, what treatment may I expect?"

"But you are a man," she cried, "and you have a right to talk politics to father. But what do you wish to tell him?"

"If I tell him what I know," said her husband, "he will either scout the matter entirely, or he will ask the sources of my information. To give them would oblige me to disclose the names of his friends who conveyed the information to me. That I cannot do, for they bound me to secrecy. So you see, Theodosia, that although I am disposed to do what they ask, I see no way in which it can be done effectually."

"Must it be done to-day?" his wife inquired.

"Oh, no," said her husband, with a laugh. "There will be plenty of time if we take a week to think it

over. I feel easier in my mind now that I have told you, and I know that your active little brain and great love for your father, in which you know that I join, will find some way out of my difficulty. But it is time now for our morning walk. We must go before the sun gets too high.

He offered his arm, which his wife took. They walked down the path beneath the spreading trees, stopping now and then to inhale the fragrance of the flowers which grew in little artificial *parterres* which had been made for them. He was a superb specimen of southern manhood, she a beautiful transplanted northern flower. Little Dickie, the goat, was browsing by the roadside. At the sight, in their minds, at the same instant, came the same thought of their little son, who was their hope and joy, and that thought was that one day he would be the grandson of a President of the United States.

CHAPTER IV

A WESTERN PARADISE

THE rays of a descending sun fell slantingly through the forest trees upon the rapidly moving Ohio River. They touched the white caps of the wavelets, kissed by a briskly blowing wind, and made them look like molten gold. The little waves moved on and dashed against a diminutive pier that projected from the shore of Blennerhassett Island. The waters, only temporarily impeded in their course, at last found their way around the end of the pier and then rushed on joyfully towards the sea, which, no doubt, they thought was near, but which was in reality thousands of miles away.

The sun sank behind the western hills and a full moon showed itself above the eastern horizon. A small boat containing a white man and two sable-hued attendants, who deftly plied the oars, hove in sight and took that branch of the river which brought it close to the little pier or wharf. The owner of the boat evidently had no intention of making a landing, but signified to his oarsmen to hold up so that he could view the enchanting picture which met his gaze.

A large lawn neatly kept and containing at least a hundred acres sloped gradually downward from the house to the river bank. This beautiful tract of verdure was in the shape of a fan with the broad segment towards the river, narrowing to a point as it approached the house. This, which was painted white, was odd in construction, being in the form of a semicircle. The

central portion was three stories in height. The circular wings were built in such a way that they ended in contact with the surrounding forest trees and effectually shut out all view of the barns and other out-buildings which were behind them.

Seated upon the veranda of the house were a lady and gentleman. They had espied the passing boat and immediately sent a servant to invite the stranger to land and accept their hospitality. This he finally decided to do, and, in response to urgent requests, he promised to become their guest for the night and postpone his journey until the next morning.

The stranger's two attendants were turned over to the care of the colored servants of the owner of the estate. These latter were slaves, but no word or action made that fact evident. The two boatmen extemporized a shelter-tent and made preparations upon the river bank for their evening meal. A fishing-pole was loaned them and they were soon provided with materials for their repast, many additions thereto being sent down to them from the house.

Supper being over, the host and his wife, accompanied by their guest, walked about the grounds to view the scene which was almost as brightly lighted by the moon as it had been hours before by the midday sun. The effect at night was even more beautiful than by day; the contrasts of light and shade were more marked under the gentle rays of the moon than beneath the more widely diffused brightness of the sun.

The traveler was an English gentleman, Ashelyn by name. He was of high social position and great wealth, and had made a visit to America for the twin purposes of recreation and possible investment.

As they entered the house, after their walk, the visitor took a final view of the sylvan retreat and the beautiful river which encircled it like the setting of a

costly gem, their natural beauties enhanced by the moonbeams which fell upon them.

His entertainer was Harman Blennerhassett, a member of a wealthy Irish family, who had sought a home in this wilderness, in the closing years of the eighteenth century, accompanied by his wife Margaret. She was of English birth, being the granddaughter of the British General Agnew, who fell at the battle of Germantown.

But the host and hostess deserve more particular description.

Harman Blennerhassett was six feet tall. He was slender in figure and had that slight stoop which seems inseparable from persons of uncommon stature. His natural expression was serious, often falling into a look of cold reserve. Both forehead and nose were prominent. It was evident that he lacked that affability and suavity of manner that was so noticeable in his life companion. He was a connoisseur of music and played well upon the violin and 'cello, but the music of the spheres, commonly called thunder, threw him into a state of nervous trepidation and affright.

He dressed usually in the old English style. He wore scarlet or buff small clothes, silk stockings, shoes with silver buckles, and a coat of blue broadcloth. When at home his dress was rather careless; he often went about in his shirt-sleeves without coat or waistcoat. In winter a long woolen roundabout or jacket protected him from the inclemency of the weather.

Margaret Blennerhassett, his wife, was above the ordinary stature and finely proportioned. Her eyes were dark blue, shaded by long, dark-brown lashes which matched her hair. Her face possessed that remarkable combination, features Grecian in mold, with cheeks rosy with the flush of health. Although it did not add to, but rather detracted from her charms, she wore, in accordance with the fashion of the time, a

silk head-dress arranged somewhat in the form of a Turkish turban.

She was bright and captivating in both speech and movement, but was also graceful and dignified. She had received a fine education and spoke and read French and Italian in addition to her mother tongue. She had a taste for poetical and dramatic composition, was a great admirer of Shakespeare, and had introduced a form of intellectual amusement which had given much pleasure both to herself and guests. It was the reading of Shakespeare's plays, the various parts or characters being assigned to the different members of the company assembled.

Possessed of remarkable physical endurance, she was a great lover of walking, and often made trips on foot over rough roads and through paths, or rather trails, from ten to twenty miles in length. She formed a picture worthy the brush of a Gainsborough, when, in her scarlet riding habit with its gilded buttons and gold lace trimming, and a wide-brimmed hat covered with ostrich plumes, she mounted her horse and dashed away, jumping fences, fallen trees, ditches, and brooks, with the skill of a cavalryman.

Within her palace walls she was no less forceful. A good housekeeper, every detail in the conduct of so large a house was at her fingers' ends. Although the product of the highest form of English education, she conformed easily to frontier customs and put her less educated and unfashionable guests fully at their ease by her affability and entire absence of any assumption of superiority. As one who knew her well has written of her, "She was indeed a rich-souled creature, in whom the first germs of womanhood had blossomed forth without a weed to check or a chill to blight their growth."

The stranger told his entertainers of what was going on in the East, while his two boatmen were conveying

the same information to the wondering ears of the servants of this island paradise.

Over a decanter of wine the traveler, who was a finely educated man, entered more fully into a recital of the political, commercial, literary, and scientific events which had lately transpired in the great world from which he had come. It was evident to him that the host and his wife were persons of distinction and of fine education, although the cause that had led them to leave the busy haunts of men and hide themselves in this island solitude was unknown to him, and no loophole was given him to introduce a question which might have supplied him with an answer, even had he been disposed to take advantage of such an opportunity.

Only one incident occurred during the evening to disturb, in the slightest degree, Mr. Ashelyn's calm and polished demeanor. He had been giving his opinion of American statesmen and had referred to Jefferson and Hamilton, when Mr. Blennerhassett broke in somewhat unceremoniously.

"Jefferson is a great man," said he. "He did a great service for the United States when he promulgated the American political doctrine of friendship for all nations, but entangling alliances with none."

"Hamilton is considered one of the foremost men of the time," remarked Mr. Ashelyn, excusing his host's conduct on account of his great interest in the conversation.

"No doubt he is," replied Blennerhassett. "He erected the edifice consecrated to liberty, but Jefferson laid the foundations in the quicksands of apprehension and uncertainty."

All would have been well if the conversation had rested here, but Mrs. Blennerhassett, who had been an interested listener, now took part in the conversation.

"Did you meet the Vice-President, Mr. Ashelyn?"

"No, Madam," he replied.

"I should so like to see him," the lady remarked. "I have heard so much and read so much about him that I have become greatly interested in him. I think he is the most remarkable man that this country has produced, and they say in the presence of ladies he is as bright, witty, and fascinating as a court gallant of the olden time."

"I do not admire that kind of man," said Mr. Ashelyn somewhat coldly.

"Neither do I," cried Blennerhassett.

The lady, though not unduly sensitive, appreciated the fact that the subject which she had introduced was not congenial, and she said no more.

A short time afterward she excused herself in order to attend to some necessary household duties, and the two gentlemen were left alone.

"Come into the library, Mr. Ashelyn," said Blennerhassett. "I have some old brandy there and some good cigars which we can enjoy while we are finishing our conversation."

When they were seated, Mr. Ashelyn said, "Mr. Blennerhassett, I trust you will pardon what may have appeared a somewhat brusque reply to your good lady's inquiry regarding Mr. Burr, the Vice-President. After she had expressed her interest so strongly I did not feel like repeating something that I learned about him and which I heard just before I left New York to make my way westward. I do not like to attempt to remove the good opinion that one person may have of another unless my evidence is conclusive. What I might have said of Mr. Burr rests only upon rumor. It is only one side of the case. If all the facts were known my present impression might be shown to be erroneous. I have no objection, however, to telling you what I heard, and you, of course, will use your

discretion as to whether it is best to communicate the intelligence to your wife."

Blennerhassett, who was about to fall into a state of abstraction seemed suddenly to recover his interest in his visitor's conversation, and remarked, "Oh, certainly, I will tell Margaret to-morrow."

Mr. Ashelyn continued, "Of one fact, however, there is ample proof. On the eleventh of July a duel took place between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton and the latter fell mortally wounded."

"Great Heavens! you do not say so," cried Blennerhassett, starting to his feet. "I am glad you did not tell Margaret, and I won't tell her either. But what was the cause of the meeting?"

"A score of causes are given in the newspapers, but no one seems to know what particular circumstance led to the fatal encounter. The funeral took place Friday, the thirteenth of July, and I left New York Saturday noon. There are some ugly rumors afloat, for the truth of which I cannot vouch, in relation to the Vice-President's conduct before and after the duel."

"Men who make a business," said Blennerhassett, "of enslaving the attentions of the fair sex are not apt to be paragons of either virtue or honor."

"The statements to which I refer," rejoined Mr. Ashelyn, "appeared in a newspaper called the American Citizen, of which I obtained a copy, but which I unfortunately have lost. There were three of a most prejudicial nature, if rightly applied to Mr. Burr's conduct. The first said that for three weeks previous to the duel he practised daily in the grounds back of his house, in order to secure proficiency in marksmanship. Of course, from one point of view he had a perfect right to do this, but his action is looked upon as evincing his intention to make sure of his ability to kill his antagonist.

"The second statement was to the effect that he

wore a suit of silk underclothing in order to protect him from injury in case he was struck by his opponent's bullet. If he did this, he violated the code of honor, so-called, and was guilty of conduct unbecoming a gentleman.

"The third statement was to the effect that on the evening of the day when the duel occurred, a party of his boon companions had a carousal at his residence, when it is said that Burr inflamed with liquor made a speech in which he declared that he was sorry he had not shot his antagonist through the heart. No gentleman would say such a thing, and I trust for his sake and for the honor of your country that this last statement at least is untrue. Excuse me, Mr. Blennerhassett, for introducing what must be a very disagreeable subject to contemplate."

"It is," cried Blennerhassett as he arose from his chair. "I shall not sleep to-night if I do not tell Margaret, and I am sure she won't sleep if I do. If what you say is true, the brand of Cain will fall upon that man, Aaron Burr. I am not a hard-hearted man, Mr. Ashelyn, but if Aaron Burr stood outside my door, naked and hungry, with a pitiless storm beating down upon him, Harman Blennerhassett would close and bar it against his entrance."

CHAPTER V

A KNAVISH PLOT

THE winter of 1803-4 was of unusual severity in the North Atlantic and Middle Atlantic States. The storm giant had been exhausted by his terrible struggles during the first three months of the year, and had succumbed quickly to the rapid advance of genial spring. The breeze was balmy; the sap had shot upward in the trees and the tiny leaves and tender shoots indicated a new awakening of the earth; the birds chattered and sang in the tree-tops and made preparations for their annual housekeeping; the turf assumed again its coating of bright emerald, and the man behind the plow was seen busily at work in the fertile fields of Manhattan Island.

It was upon such a picture as this that a man, seated before a desk in an office which was evidently that of a lawyer, looked out. But he only looked out. He saw, but he did not observe. His mind was not upon the beauties of spring, but upon his own thoughts. It was nothing to him that there was a smile upon the face of Nature as beautiful to the interested observer as that upon the face of a lovely child after its infantile sorrows have been mitigated or assuaged by kind words or wished-for gifts.

The man was a little below medium stature and in the prime of life. His form was well-knit and muscu-

lar, indicating that in early life he had been inured to privations and hardships. But it is this man's face that merits the most careful attention. As he sat there with his features in repose, if not a handsome man he was surely a good looking one. There was a look in the eyes and in the general expression of the face calculated to beget confidence in the mind of the average beholder.

But what change is this? He took from the desk the letter which he had written and began to read it. Then a look of sly cunning, changing into an expression of deep malignity, overspread his features.

'My dear Sir, the letter read: I hope you will pardon my apparent presumption in addressing this letter to you. You are well known to me by reputation, and I regret that I have never had the pleasure of being formally introduced to you. But when matters of great public moment are at stake I think that these refined points of courtesy may be dispensed with, and sincerely trust that you will join with me in this opinion.

I would not write you if I did not know that our common country was in peril, and that the united services of all good citizens will be required to avert impending danger.

A man well known to both of us, whose political actions have been condemned by all good men in both of our great political parties, is now endeavoring to rally all the malcontents in this State to his standard with the avowed purpose of becoming the Governor of New York. You know as well as I do, my dear sir, that Aaron Burr's ambition will not terminate if he is elected to that office. He is, as I often called him in my letters, the Catiline of America. His aim is to use the position of governor simply as a stepping-stone to the presidency of the United States. If he should gain that high position, which God forbid, the horrors

of the French Revolution will undoubtedly be repeated in this unhappy country.

I know it is not considered honorable to disclose what is seen or heard at a private gathering; but, as you will notice, this letter is marked "Confidential;" I shall take that as my warranty for conveying to you certain facts of which you could possibly learn in no other way.

I was the guest of Mr. Burr at a private dinner party. The majority of the other guests were French Republicans of the reddest hue. I will not mention their names, but they can be found written in letters of blood in the history of that unhappy country.

Toasts and sentiments were offered at that dinner which, received with acclamation and drunk with enthusiasm, would have chilled the blood even of that great friend of French Jacobins, Mr. Jefferson, our worthy President.

You will infer from my letter that I wish you to aid me in every way in your power to secure the defeat of Aaron Burr. Upon receipt of an intimation to the effect that you will do this, I will write you more fully and indicate more precisely certain lines of action which, in my opinion, give promise of success.

I have the honor to remain,

Your obedient servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

To a citizen living in the early part of the nineteenth century, the two facial expressions previously referred to might have required lingual explanation. To those who live in the present day, however, that remarkable story of double identity, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, comes as an illustration of apparently great goodness and evidently greater baseness.

For some unknown reason, there always existed in the mind of Alexander Hamilton a great antipathy to

the military and political advancement of his competitors. It probably sprang from an envious nature, but he did not display this envy in a way to provoke open criticism. His methods were always stealthy, like the step of the tiger ready to spring upon his prey.

Among his competitors there was one who stood so far above the others that Hamilton's envious feeling came to be concentrated upon this one person who was none other than Aaron Burr. They had been rivals in love, rivals in war, rivals in the practice of the law, and finally rivals for political advancement.

That memorable contest, the result of which was the election, as President of the United States, of Thomas Jefferson, and Aaron Burr as Vice-President, had taken place four years previous. By a combination of circumstances, Aaron Burr had lost caste with his party, and he was aware that his political advancement depended upon showing his political power in New York, the State of his adoption. For that purpose, he had announced himself as a candidate for governor of that State, and the election was to take place in the latter part of the same month in which we see Alexander Hamilton seated in his law office.

It is evident from the contents of the letter which has been given, that Hamilton's purpose in writing it was to induce its recipient to use all possible influence against the election of Aaron Burr. In it were certain hints and suggestions as to certain things to be done to further this object; the word "Confidential," which was heavily underscored, indicated that Hamilton had not forgotten his anonymous and secret way of undermining or working against a political rival.

He had just finished perusing his letter when the door was opened and a man of most unprepossessing appearance entered. Hamilton looked up and an expression of disapprobation passed over his face.

"Why are you here?" he asked. "Have I not told

you that when you wished to see me, it must be in the evening, at my house, and not at my office?"

"All right, General," responded the man. "I did not come here on purpose to see you. I had business upstairs with another party and I thought I would drop in for a moment. When I get through I can go out by the back way and no one will see me. Shall I turn the key in the lock?" Hamilton nodded, then he said:

"You know I do not wish anyone to see us together, especially at this time."

"Yes," replied the man, "I know that you are very guarded in making appointments to meet people at your office. You manage to keep up an air of great respectability, which I envy you; but if your opponents could read the letters that you write I don't think they would have such a high opinion of you."

Hamilton's face grew red with vexation and displeasure.

"How dare you, Cheetham," said he, "speak to me in such a manner."

"Now, General," replied Cheetham, "I advise you not to speak my name so loud. Somebody might hear you and then they would know I was here even if they did not actually see me. Call me Simon or Peter, or any other name, but don't say Cheetham," and, as he spoke his own name, his voice fell to a whisper. "You ask why I speak to you in this way. Are we not engaged in the same business, and am I not doing as much of the hard work as you, and although when we meet upon the street you do not know me, can't you give me the satisfaction of talking to you as an equal when we are together? If you are not willing to talk on these terms, I have nothing more to say. I came here to tell you a big idea that I propose to work on election day, but it is my idea although it will work to your benefit. I do not care

to say anything about it unless you are willing to hear it."

"Go on," said the General. "Pardon my exhibition of feeling, but the condition of political affairs in this State troubles me night and day."

"You mean," replied Cheetham, "that the possibility of your friend Burr becoming Governor is what troubles you night and day."

"Well, put it that way," answered Hamilton, "if it pleases you."

"I choose to put it just as it is," retorted Cheetham. "I know what you are up to, and I know that I am doing all I can to help you. I am prepared to do more on the same terms as I have done the rest. It takes money to run my paper. As long as I get the money, whether it comes in at the back door or the front door, or I find it down in the cellar, or up in the attic, it makes no difference to me. I don't want checks or bank-bills, but good solid gold which shows no imprint of the hand that held it last before it came into mine."

"You have always been paid, haven't you?" asked Hamilton.

"Yes, and I always propose to be," replied the other. "When the pay stops, the work stops."

"And I suppose," remarked Hamilton, and there was a bitter tone in his voice, "if someone paid you more, you would serve him as well as others who offer you less."

"Well," answered Cheetham, "I carry on my paper on the same plan that other mechanical business is carried on. I get the highest price possible for my goods. Do you find any fault with that, General? Let us change the subject; if we don't, we shall quarrrel. I have an idea, and I want to see if you approve it. If you do, you can depend upon me to put it through. You know," and his voice again became a whisper, as he

drew his chair close to Hamilton's, "that we none of us are any better than we ought to be, you included." The General bit his lip but said nothing. "Now by hook or crook, but I think perhaps from articles that have appeared in the American Citizen, the law-abiding and God-fearing countrymen of this State have got the impression that Aaron Burr is a very bad man; by bad, I mean morally bad. The home and the family are great points of pride with our country citizens, and to their minds a man who invades the sanctity of home is the worst criminal in the world. Now, you know as well as I do that Aaron Burr is no worse than the rest of us, but it would not do for us to acknowledge that. We should lose a great political advantage by doing so. Now, the little scheme that I have in mind is intended to prove to the aforesaid—I know you like legal terms—law-abiding and God-fearing citizens, that Aaron Burr is a great deal worse than he has ever been pictured. I propose in every issue from now until election day to make a bitter attack upon the moral character of Aaron Burr, and, for election day, I propose to print a handbill and have it circulated and posted, that will declare in unmistakable language that Aaron Burr is the vilest profligate in the United States. I have the exact words written down in my office, but I do not propose to show them to you or to any other man until they are in print. It is my private opinion that that handbill will do the business, coupled with the persistent attacks that I shall make in my paper. Shall I go ahead?"

The General looked at him and an inquiring expression came into his face.

"You are afraid," said Cheetham, "that my price is going to be too high. Well, I am going to surprise you by being reasonable. All I want is my regular payment and a certain part of the official advertising which I will pick out in case Mr. Burr is defeated.

Do not let us spend our time on details, just say go ahead, and leave it to me. Your name will never be connected with the affair, and whatever responsibility there is, I am willing to accept."

Hamilton nodded his head.

"That is enough," remarked Cheetham. "Now I have outlined the heavy artillery work which used to be your province in the army, but you must do a little pistol practice yourself. I want you to start the same idea from an eminently respectable source."

As Cheetham uttered the word "respectable," he smiled grimly.

"You have many correspondents, General, to whom if a word were dropped, confidentially, you know, something would appear in the papers in the same line as what I am going to say, but from a different point of view. For instance, I am working down in the valley while your shot comes from the top of the mountain. Do you catch my idea?" Hamilton inclined his head again.

Cheetham continued: "I think our business is over. You will see nothing more of me until after the election unless you communicate with me in the usual way and desire my company. I shall keep my eye out for that highly respectable pistol-shot at our friend A. B.," and with another grim smile he left the room.

Hamilton sat musing for some ten minutes, most of the time with his hand covering his eyes. Then he folded and addressed the letter which he had been perusing before Cheetham came in. Next he took a fresh sheet of paper, dated it, marked it "Confidential" as before, and opened it with the words "My dear Cooper." The entire contents of that letter never became public. It is sufficient at present to know that it was addressed to Dr. C. D. Cooper, Albany, New York.

General Hamilton then arose from his chair, feeling that he had well and satisfactorily performed the legal

and political duties of the day, and wended his way homeward to pass the evening with his wife and the children who bore his name.

As he was walking up Broadway, a thin, wiry-built man, with his head bent slightly forward, crossed the street with rapid strides and approached him.

"Good afternoon, General," he said in a courtly manner. "Upon examining the court records I find that owing to the sickness of our friend Livingston, you have taken his place in the suit of Busteed *versus* Dalrymple. You are probably acquainted with the fact that I have been retained by Mr. Dalrymple. The case will be called early to-morrow morning. Will it be convenient for you, General, to have the case come to trial then, or shall you ask for a postponement? Of course, under the circumstances, I am willing to extend to you every possible legal courtesy."

"Thank you, Colonel Burr," replied Hamilton. "I was only informed of my retention in the case this afternoon, and if you will consent to a postponement of several days I shall appreciate it very much."

"With pleasure, General," replied Colonel Burr, "but there is one matter upon which I am not disposed to allow any further postponement."

"What is that?" queried Hamilton, a slight look of astonishment showing itself upon his face.

"Don't you remember," said Burr, "that when you dined with me more than six weeks ago, you gave me your promise that before a month passed you would again accept my hospitality?"

"I had forgotten——"

"But I have not," broke in Colonel Burr. "I can easily forget the animadversions of my enemies, but it is not easy so to do with the promises of my friends. There is to be a little gathering to-morrow evening at Richmond Hill. This time, ladies and gentlemen. Politics are to be barred, and I have no doubt we shall

pass a very enjoyable evening. Will you come, General?"

That benignant and confidence-inspiring expression that had won the General so many friends and admirers came to his face at that moment.

"I shall be delighted, my dear Colonel," he replied.

The great rivals shook hands warmly and parted, each going his chosen way. If this world were in reality a Palace of Truth in which thoughts and motives could be as easily divined as faces are seen, such hypocrisy were impossible. Talleyrand, the great French diplomat, said that language was given to man so that he could conceal his thoughts. It might be added truthfully that facial expression was conferred upon us so that we might the more completely conceal our thoughts, and intensify the effect of unfelt and unmeant words.

CHAPTER VI

"FIFTY YEARS AFTER MY DEATH"

TWENTY-NINE years had passed since the ever-memorable battle of Bunker Hill, a battle which, though indecisive from a military point of view, was fully decisive in one respect, in that it elevated the patriotic feelings of the American colonists to the point of exaltation.

Twenty-nine years had passed since Aaron Burr, a stripling of nineteen, had joined the American army, as it was by courtesy called, at Cambridge. During that comparatively short period of time what a career had been his! He had won high renown for his conduct during the war; he had been admitted to the New York bar; he had married, had become the father of a beautiful daughter who was now also married and the mother of a handsome boy bearing her father's name; he had been a member of the New York legislature; he had been appointed attorney-general of the State by one who was a political enemy, but who recognized his many talents for the position, and who afterwards offered him a seat upon the bench; he had been a senator of the United States, and now in the month of June, 1804, he was just completing a term of four years as Vice-President of the nation for which he had fought so bravely, and which he had served almost continuously in positions of trust and honor.

The twenty-ninth anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill had been a very warm but very pleasant day. It was such a day as that which one of our illustrious

poets must have had in mind when he sang that superb song, two lines of which will be found in the mouths of American children and in those of its oldest inhabitants:

> "What is so rare as a day in June;
> Then, if ever, come perfect days."

But about eight o'clock in the evening a change came over the face of nature. Black portentous clouds were blown up swiftly and soon shrouded from sight the star-lit heavens. Then came from a distance mutterings of the impending storm. Jagged forks of light shot from the seamy clouds, followed almost immediately by volumes of sound that resembled the broadsides from a dozen frigates. Then the rain came down in torrents and only those pedestrians could be seen in the streets of New York who were hurrying homeward, or seeking to secure some other haven of shelter.

In the great house called Richmond Hill but few lights could be seen, and those were in the lower story where the housekeeping duties were performed. There was no light in the great library, and this seemed to attest the fact which would have been found to be true—that the master of the house was absent. He had gone to New Jersey early that morning on legal business, and had left word that he should not return until the next morning, so the care of the establishment devolved upon Peggy, the colored housekeeper, who was competent from every point of view to maintain order and decorum in the great mansion.

A candelabrum was burning in the great hall, for it was not an uncommon thing to have many evening callers at Richmond Hill, and the master of the house had given strict orders that the hall lights were never to be extinguished until it was known that he had retired for the night.

The colored servants of the house, including Peggy,

numbered eight. Acting either from the adage that "misery loves company," or that "there is strength in numbers," the whole household had gathered in Peggy's brightly-lighted kitchen where she was engaged in some household duties.

This invasion was evidently not to her liking, for turning to her uninvited visitors she cried:

"What's all yo' niggers crowded in hyah fo'? Yo'se no business loafin' roun' hyah an' interruptin' me. Now all o' yo' git out o' hyah or I'll tell Massa Burr when he comes home."

Peggy returned to her duties, evidently disposed to wait for a short time to see the effect of her words, but no one moved. Then she turned upon them again:

"I know what yo'se all in hyah fo'—'cause yo'se all 'fraid. When yo' hear the Lord a-talkin' ter yo' it makes all yo' sinners think of yo' guilty actions, and yo' come down hyah thinkin' that if yo' keep close to a good Christian woman like me there'll be some mercy shown yo'."

"I don't think that's very Christian talk," said Colonel Burr's valet who was named John, but who had been nicknamed John the Baptist by his fellow servants.

"Oh yes 'tis," rejoined Peggy, "don' yo' know the Good Book says "who the Lord lovef he chastenef. Now yo' niggers don' know what chastenef means. It means ter give yo' a lickin,' and yo' know yo'selves that yo' all o' yo' deserves a good lickin'."

"We are not slaves," said John, "and our master does not treat us as though we were."

"Well, that's 'cause the massa is good, and not 'cause yo' is," retorted Peggy.

Further argument was cut short by the sound of a series of loud knocks at the front door.

"I reckon Massa Burr's got home," said Peggy, and as if by magic the other servants disappeared from the kitchen and sought their respective posts of duty, with

the exception of young Sam, a colored boy about thirteen years of age who had been deputed to act as chore boy or assistant to Peggy.

"Come hyah," said Peggy to Sam, "yo'se too young to be very wicked, Sam, but yo' ain't too young to be awful lazy. See those 'ere knives? Now yo' take that brick-dust and yo' jus' polish those knives till they are as bright as"—As Peggy spoke the last words, there came a gigantic flash of lightning that filled the room with a silvery flame and made the candles look dim—"that flash o' lightnin'," continued Aunt Peggy, evidently unmoved. "Be careful yo' don' cut yo'se'f for them knives is as sharp as"— Close upon her last word followed peal after peal of thunder. The sounds seemed to be right above the house, and a nervous person quaking with inward fear would, no doubt, have declared that the house itself shook from chimney-top to foundation-stone, but the unmoved Peggy completed her speech by saying—"that bust o' thunder."

When John opened the front door a very old man clad in coarse garments, which were apparently wet through by the rain, asked if Colonel Burr was in. When informed that he was absent and would not return until the next morning, he seemed much distressed.

"I am very sorry," said he, "it is not for myself, but for a dear friend who is dying. He wishes to make a deposition, and the matter must be attended to by a lawyer."

"Oh," said John, "if a lawyer is what you want, why don't you go to Judge Van Ness? He is a great friend of Colonel Burr's, and I will tell you how to find his house," and John proceeded to give the necessary directions.

The stranger thanked him over and over again. John closed the door, leaving him once more to the blackness of the night and the fury of the storm which was in no whit abated.

Half an hour had hardly passed before the sound of wheels was heard, and John at his post of duty and on the alert, opened the front door and admitted Colonel Burr. His master was drenched to the skin even as the poor stranger had been.

"I will go at once to my room, John, and change my clothing," said Colonel Burr. "Has Peggy retired?"

"No, sir," replied John.

"Then tell her to send up a light repast to the library. I was so anxious to reach home, and the storm was so severe that I did not get any supper."

"What will you have, sir?" inquired John, politely.

"Tell Peggy to send me anything that can be easily prepared," Burr replied as he ascended the front stairs.

When the master of the house reached his library half an hour later, a bright fire was burning in the open fireplace, and a slice of cold meat, some toasted bread, a dish of stewed prunes, of which he was very fond, and a cup of smoking coffee were upon a tray on his library table. There were also several letters upon the table that had arrived during the day, and as he ate his simple meal he took them up and glanced at the superscriptions.

One addressed to him in a dainty feminine hand he held to his lips a moment, then he said to himself: "Poor Leonora; what a sad fate for a woman possessed of such a rich fund of intellectual sympathy and spiritual feeling, to be bound to such an unappreciative bore of a husband. What a curse are these marriages brought about to maintain family pride and combine family riches. Were she to-day the mistress of Richmond Hill"—as he said this, he looked about the handsome apartment—"she would be a queen. As it is, she is only a slave."

Half a dozen other letters were glanced at and then thrown upon the library table, evidently not being considered of much consequence by their reader, but the

last one that he perused was apparently of the greatest importance.

When he finished it, Burr arose from his chair and held the letter in his hand, walking excitedly several times up and down the long apartment.

"Can it be possible?" he asked himself aloud. "I do not mind the attacks of my enemies, but this perfidy of one I thought my friend cuts me to the quick. I knew we differed honestly in our political opinions, but I saw no reason why we should not be true and loyal friends in our social relations. Why, it is not a year since I went to him and repeated what some busy-body had told me he had said about me. He apologized, and assured me that there should never be cause for any such feeling on my part in the future. I believed him, for I have always considered him a man of honor in matters of honor."

Then he crumpled the letter in his hand and stood looking into the blazing fire.

"This must be stopped," he said finally, "and it shall be, once and for all."

He walked deliberately to his seat at the table, drew a sheet of paper towards him, dipped his quill in the ink and wrote, "New York, June——"

At that moment the old clock in the hallway struck the hour of twelve. It was midnight. Burr counted the strokes and then finished the line which he had commenced—"18, 1804." Then he dropped his quill, and taking up the crumpled letter opened it and read it through once more. It was as follows:

NEW YORK, *June* 17, 1804.

MY DEAR BURR: During our late noble but unsuccessful campaign, you and I were so busy in speaking and writing to those who believed as we did, that no doubt we were somewhat unmindful of what was being said and done by those who did not believe as we did.

Last evening I was looking over an accumulation of old papers and found the enclosed article. I think you will be somewhat interested in the lines that I have underscored. Perhaps you will agree with me now in an opinion that I have often expressed in regard to a certain individual in whose favor you have often taken up the cudgel against my attacks. I will call at your house to-morrow morning and as we walk down town together we can talk the matter over.

Sincerely your friend,
W. P. Van Ness.

Then Burr took the newspaper slip which had been enclosed in his friend Van Ness's letter and read again the lines which had been underscored:

"General Hamilton and Judge Kent have declared, in substance, that they look upon Mr. Burr to be a dangerous man and one who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government."

"I could detail to you a still more despicable opinion which General Hamilton has expressed of Mr. Burr."

Burr then took up his quill once more and finished his letter.

Sir: I send for your perusal a letter signed Charles D. Cooper, which, though apparently published some time ago, has but recently come to my knowledge. Mr. Van Ness, who does me the favor to deliver this, will point out to you that clause of the letter to which I particularly request your attention.

You must perceive, sir, the necessity of a prompt and unqualified acknowledgment or denial of the use of any expression which would warrant the assertions of Dr. Cooper. I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,
A. Burr.

Gen. Hamilton.

Burr then made a copy of the letter and folded and addressed the original. Next he summoned his valet and went up stairs to his bedchamber. In ten minutes the great mansion was wrapped in darkness. There was no light even in the room occupied by the master of the house; in fact he was in bed and soon asleep, unmindful of the facts that he had been successful that day and had won an important suit for a wealthy client; that he had been exposed for hours to a drenching storm and had suffered no harm therefrom; that he had received a letter which had aroused in his mind a combination of sad and bitter feelings; and that he had written a letter, the possible consequences of which even he could not at that time have foreseen.

On the morning of the eighteenth of June Colonel Burr was up early and partook of his simple breakfast of an egg, a slice of bread, and a cup of coffee. He then sought his library and wrote a reply to the letter, the sight of which had led him to say "Poor Leonora." He finished and addressed it, then placed it in the inside pocket of his coat. At that moment a visitor was announced, and Judge Van Ness entered.

"Good morning, Colonel."

"Good morning, Judge," were the salutations spoken almost conjointly. The two gentlemen seated themselves.

"You have read my letter?" interrogated Van Ness.

"Yes," replied Burr, "I got home late last night, although I had not expected to arrive until this morning. I read your letter and have written one to Hamilton, but I have thought it all over and I have decided not to send it."

He took the letter in his hands and made a motion as though to tear it in two.

"Wait a moment," cried Van Ness, grasping his hands. "Don't tear it up yet. I have something to tell you. Did you see your visitor last evening?"

"What visitor?" queried Burr.

"Perhaps he came before you got home. He reached my house at nine o'clock."

Burr rang a bell that stood upon the library table and John entered.

"Did any one call to see me last evening, John?"

"Oh, yes, sir," stammered John, "I meant to tell you, but you went right up stairs, and then when you came down I went up to get your clothes to dry them, and I forgot."

"Forgot!" said Burr, somewhat sternly. "That may be a good reason why you did not tell me, but it is no excuse for your not telling me. What did the visitor say, John?"

"He asked for you," said John, "and I told him you was out and wouldn't get back until this morning. Then he said that a dying man wished to make a disposition" —at this word Van Ness smiled—"and he must have a lawyer, because the man couldn't wait until you got home"—this last remark caused Burr himself to smile —"so I sent him to Mr. Van Ness for I knew he was a friend of yours."

"You did perfectly right, John," said Colonel Burr, "many people who have had superior advantages to those which you possess, forget much oftener than you do; only remember what I have so often told you, that forgetfulness in a valet may cause his master much inconvenience. You are excused, John."

John left the room and Van Ness continued:

"Well, I answered the summons and had the most remarkable adventure of my life; one with which you, however, are the most closely connected."

"You render me somewhat curious," said Burr gravely.

"I think this document will satisfy your curiosity," remarked Van Ness as he unfolded a legal-looking paper containing some half dozen sheets of foolscap.

"If you will pardon me, Colonel," said Van Ness, "while you are reading it, I will enjoy a cigar."

"Certainly," said Burr, "you will find a box in the cabinet."

Van Ness smoked and Burr read. Van Ness eyed attentively the unimpassioned and unmoved face. In the presence of others, that face never expressed any indication of the thoughts, the motives, or the feelings that actuated the heart or influenced the brain of their possessor. He read the document carefully from the beginning to the close. Then he laid it on the library table and looked at Van Ness.

"I know," said Van Ness, "where the very best quality of cowhides can be purchased."

"No doubt," replied Burr, "but cowhides are not used by gentlemen in affairs of honor."

"No," rejoined Van Ness, "but a cowhide may be used by a gentleman who is a gentleman, in dealing with one who is supposed to be a gentleman, but who is not."

"I understand you," said Burr. "I cannot follow your suggestion, but the reading of that document forces me to send to General Hamilton the letter that I was on the point of destroying."

"I am glad of that," said Van Ness.

"I may, or may not be in the future," remarked Colonel Burr as he arose from his seat.

"Here is a copy of my letter to the General," he said, passing it to Van Ness. "Please keep the correspondence which may or may not be voluminous."

While Van Ness was reading the letter Burr lighted a cigar, walked to the library table and took up the document which Van Ness had given him to read.

"That will do for a beginning," said Van Ness as he folded up the copy of the letter and put it in his pocket, "but what are you going to do about that dying con-

fession?" he asked, pointing to the paper which Burr held in his hand.

"I am thinking," replied Burr.

"If I were in your position," said Van Ness, "if the General did not send me a complete explanation and ample apology for those lines in Cooper's letter, I would publish that deposition and send it broadcast through the country. That double-faced friend has had two strings to his bow too long. One of them should be snapped, and I am the man who would do it."

"I have decided," said Burr.

He took a sheet of paper, and placing the deposition inside, he folded it up securely. Then he sealed it in the middle and on both ends with his private seal. Taking up his quill he wrote in a bold hand—"The Property of Aaron Burr. Not to be opened and the contents made public until fifty years have elapsed after my death."

"That is final," said Burr as he passed the document to Van Ness who quickly read what was written upon it.

"As you will," said Van Ness, "it is your right to decide."

"Keep the document," said Burr, "until this affair is over at least," and Van Ness placed it in his pocket.

Then, smoking their cigars, the two gentlemen left the mansion and passed slowly through its beautiful grounds until they reached the road. Then they locked arms and walked down town to their respective offices.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHALLENGE

IT was not until the twentieth of June that a reply was received by Colonel Burr from General Hamilton. It had been delivered at Colonel Burr's law office, but he had been too busy with his clients to do more than open it and ascertain that it was an answer to his communication of the eighteenth.

He sent a messenger to Judge Van Ness's office requesting him to call on him that evening at Richmond Hill. Eight o'clock found the two gentlemen seated once more in Burr's library. The General's reply was long. Burr read it over to himself, and then read it aloud to Van Ness. He was an eager and attentive listener.

"Special pleading," said Van Ness, with a low chuckle. "He apparently is not willing to file a direct answer, or enter a demurrer, but rather insinuates that he is disposed to deny the jurisdiction of the court. But the point of his letter, like the sting of a scorpion, is in the end of it. Did you notice, Colonel Burr, that he virtually says that if you are not satisfied with this rambling, and, to me, very unsatisfactory communication, that he is prepared to abide the consequences. I never imagined he was capable of rising to quite so high a level as that, and even now I think it is more braggadocio on paper than anything else. Do you think he will fight, Colonel?"

"If I challenge him, he will have to," replied Burr.

"Well," said Van Ness, savagely, "if you challenge

him and he finds some sneaking way of avoiding a meeting, I will cowhide him, if you don't."

"Calm yourself, Van Ness," said Burr, courteously. "I shall count upon your good offices as my second, but I do not think you will be called upon to take the place of the principal, although I know of no one to whom I would sooner confide the care of my honor were I unable to defend it myself."

The two men clasped hands; then Burr continued: "I will think the General's letter over this evening, and will answer it to-morrow. Will you kindly see that it is delivered, Van Ness?"

"Certainly," replied the latter, "there is no service that you can ask of me, Colonel, that I will not gladly render, even to taking your place as principal in this affair."

As he said this both men smiled, but there was a great difference in those smiles. One was savage in its nature, while the other had a grave tinge of sadness. When Burr was alone, he sat down and read Hamilton's letter through again. His reply was short but to the point.

On the twenty-second of June, General Hamilton called upon his friend, Nathaniel Pendleton, who, like Van Ness, was a judge. The interview took place in Judge Pendleton's private office. General Hamilton was evidently much excited and disturbed by something that had taken place, and his friend looked inquiringly at him as he noticed these marks of unusual excitement.

"What has happened, General?" he inquired, after Hamilton had sat for five minutes without opening the expected conversation. The General took several papers from his pocket, neatly folded, and marked "1," "2," "3."

"Read those, if you please, Judge," said he, "in the order in which they are numbered."

While Pendleton was reading, Hamilton arose from his chair and, walking to a window at the farther end of the office, looked out upon the busy scene, for the Judge's office was upon a much frequented thoroughfare.

"Well, General," said Pendleton, as he finished reading Burr's second letter, "what is to be the up-shot of this?"

Hamilton walked slowly towards the speaker and resumed his chair.

"When Mr. Van Ness brought Colonel Burr's last letter, I told him that I thought Burr's first letter was rude and offensive, and that it was not possible for me to give it any answer other than that Mr. Burr must take such steps as he might think proper."

"What did Van Ness say to that?" inquired Pendleton.

"Well," replied the General, "he didn't seem quite satisfied to take my answer back to Colonel Burr. He requested me to take time to deliberate and then return an answer when I might possibly entertain a different opinion, and said that he would call on me to receive it." General Hamilton continued, "I told Mr. Van Ness that I did not perceive it possible for me to give any other answer than that I mentioned, unless Mr. Burr would take back his letter and write me one which would admit of a different reply. Keep those letters, Judge, and here is another which I have written and which I authorize you to deliver to Mr. Van Ness in case he calls upon you. I am going to my country house this afternoon, and may not be back to the city for several days. I know I can count upon your best and most friendly services in this matter."

"Certainly," replied Judge Pendleton, "I regret the occurrence, but the situation must be faced with dignity and with a due regard for your well-established reputation."

General Hamilton left the office, apparently of the opinion that an affair of honor could be settled by a brace of lawyers as though it were a mere legal squabble.

Van Ness was anxious to have the matter culminate at the earliest possible moment. He knew General Hamilton's peculiarities as a lawyer, and felt sure that he would resort to every possible scheme to defer making a definite reply, trusting that the lapse of time and the excess of verbiage bestowed by him upon the question would eventually so cover up and befog the main points at issue, that it would consume much time to arrive at the real heart of the discussion; so, in a fever of impatience, he despatched a letter to General Hamilton.

Van Ness having learned accidentally that General Hamilton had visited Judge Pendleton, presumably in relation to the dispute between himself and Colonel Burr, took occasion to call upon Pendleton and received from him a letter, it being the one that General Hamilton had left with Judge Pendleton at his interview with the latter.

On the twenty-sixth of June, Judge Van Ness received a communication from Judge Pendleton. A conference took place that day between Judge Van Ness and Colonel Burr, as a result of which the former sent what was considered to be the closing letter of the correspondence to Judge Pendleton. After mature reflection, however, Colonel Burr decided to accompany the challenge with a further communication relating to certain points which, in his opinion, had not been fully covered in Judge Van Ness's last letter; so, when the challenge was presented to Judge Pendleton by Judge Van Ness, the latter handed him a communication written by him after a long interview with Colonel Burr in the library at Richmond Hill.

At the time that Judge Van Ness called upon Judge

Pendleton with the challenge, the latter, in behalf of General Hamilton, requested time for a reply, urging as a reason that General Hamilton was anxious to close up certain legal cases with which he was connected; that the session of the court would soon close, and that he trusted Colonel Burr would be willing to consent to the postponement under the circumstances. Van Ness communicated with Burr, and the latter willingly consented to allowing the time requested.

On Friday, the sixth of July, the circuit being closed, Mr. Pendleton informed Mr. Van Ness that General Hamilton would be ready at any time after the Sunday following.

On Monday, the ninth, preliminaries were arranged by the seconds, and the time of the meeting fixed for seven o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, July eleventh, the place selected being Weehawken Heights, about three miles above Hoboken on the Jersey side of the Hudson River, a famous resort for duellists.

On Monday evening, Judge Van Ness called upon Colonel Burr and gave him a full account of his interview with Judge Pendleton. Burr listened attentively and during the recital made notes covering the details of the arrangements which had been concluded between the seconds.

"I hope, Colonel Burr," said Van Ness, "that you are satisfied with the way I have conducted the somewhat lengthy and, to a marked degree, vexatious negotiations. It was always hard for me to deal with a man who is not willing to come to the point. I dislike verbiage and delay, but I knew from the first that in dealing with Hamilton we should have to contend with both."

"My good friend," replied Burr, "your services have been of inestimable value to me, and I cannot find words to assure you how much I appreciate them. There

is no doubt in your mind, I hope, Van Ness, as to the propriety and justice of the step I am taking."

"Not at all," replied his friend. "You are well enough acquainted with me, Burr, to know that if I thought you were in the wrong, I should have said so long ago. I might have had some difficulty in putting so obstinate and determined a man as yourself on what I considered the right track, but I should have tried, just the same."

Burr smiled and said, "It is the honesty and faithfulness of such a friendship that constitutes its great value. The opinion of those friends who continually pat me on the back and cry good fellow is of little weight with me, but the friend who challenges my views and opposes my opinions with arguments and authorities is entitled to my respect, and I hope I shall always pay due deference to such honest opinions."

At this juncture, a loud knock was heard at the front door. A moment later, John entered the library and announced a visitor in the person of Mr. John Swartwout. Burr told the servant to admit him. During the short interval which preceded Mr. Swartwout's entrance, Van Ness said to Burr, in a low voice,

"I have an idea. Have you any objections to telling Swartwout? He is as true as steel. Let's ask him for his judgment on this correspondence, but do not tell him the whole truth until we get his opinion."

"Agreed," said Burr. Then they both arose to greet the visitor.

After a rambling conversation relating to general matters of more or less interest and importance to the three friends, Van Ness remarked,

"Swartwout, we have a puzzle for you. Our friend, Burr, here, you know, is always getting into trouble. We know it is not his fault but the other fellow's fault. Now, do not be surprised at what I am going to say, but our friend, the Colonel, may have to send a chal-

lenge to a certain party who has been abusing him secretly. Do not try to guess who it is."

As he spoke, he raised a warning finger and shook it at Swartwout. Van Ness continued,

"A long correspondence has taken place within the past ten or twelve days, between the Colonel and his probable antagonist. I have acted as Colonel Burr's friend in communication with the other principal and his friend. I have the correspondence here." He took from his pocket a bundle of letters. "Now, I have proposed to the Colonel, and he agrees to my suggestion, to read these letters to you, omitting names, and ask your opinion on certain points."

"But I am no judge," replied Swartwout. "Would it not be a better plan for you to act as judge, Van Ness, and let me read some of the letters?"

"The reason, my dear Swartwout, that you are selected to pass judgment upon this correspondence is because you are not a judge, so far as a seat upon the bench is concerned, and for that reason you will be more likely to decide the matters in dispute on the basis of justice and equity than if you were simply an adept in points of law and legal procedure, as I am, if I may be allowed to compliment myself."

"I am ready to do anything to aid Colonel Burr and you," said Mr. Swartwout.

Van Ness assorted the letters, giving to Colonel Burr those written by himself, while he retained those written by General Hamilton and Judge Pendleton.

"Now," said Van Ness, "Swartwout, take a sheet of paper and a pen and write down these points upon which we shall ask your decision on the letters, after they have been read. You will also need paper to make your judicial notes upon during the reading of each communication."

"I am ready," replied Swartwout.

"The points are these," said Van Ness. "First. In

the language assumed to have been used by Colonel Burr's antagonist, did the latter exceed the latitude allowed in political discussion. Second. Was Colonel Burr warranted, as a gentleman, in demanding an explanation, an apology, or both? Third. Has Colonel Burr's antagonist, or his second in this correspondence, given Colonel Burr an explanation, apology, or both? Fourth. Considering the alleged language used by Colonel Burr's antagonist and the answers received from him, or his second, will Colonel Burr be justified, by the code of honor now existing or recognized by gentlemen as governing such disputes, in sending his antagonist a challenge?"

Judge Van Ness had spoken slowly in order that Mr. Swartwout might write down the questions to which he was expected to give answers after the reading of the correspondence. The reading then began, Colonel Burr presenting the short letter, dated June eighteenth, which opened the correspondence. He and Judge Van Ness alternated, reading slowly in order that Mr. Swartwout could make notes as they proceeded. Several times he called upon Van Ness to read over again certain portions of his letters, Swartwout stating that it was hard to discern the exact meaning as the writer had evidently tried to cover it up by an excess of words and tortuous phrases. When the reading was concluded, Swartwout asked,

"May I take this matter under consideration and report to you my decisions, say to-morrow evening?"

"Oh, no," cried Van Ness, "we must know to-night. This is an exigency which will not allow of any postponement such as you mention. We will give you half an hour in which to think the matter over carefully. Burr and I will take a stroll through the grounds, for the night is a beautiful one."

John Swartwout was an honest man; he was a great friend of Colonel Burr. In the heat of political strife,

he could become a partisan but in the case now before him he decided to be governed by a strict sense of justice and in no way allow himself to be biased in favor of his friend and political leader, Colonel Burr. It is a pity that there are not more men made of this sort of material.

He read the inquiries propounded by Judge Van Ness carefully; then he went through the copious notes which he had made even more carefully. Then he arose and walked up and down the long apartment, weighing the *pros* and *cons* in his mind. He walked to the window, which was open, and looked out upon the grounds flooded with moonlight, and upon the river which spread like a white sheet of silver before him. Seeing his friends at no great distance, he called out,

"The judge is ready to give his decision."

A few moments later the three friends were once more seated at the great table in the library.

"In coming to a decision on the case submitted to me," began Swartwout, "as you well know, I am ignorant of the name and social position of Colonel Burr's antagonist. If these points were known to me, they might or might not have a bearing upon the questions at issue. Certain language may be used by an inferior in reference to one who is his superior, which the latter is not justified in taking too seriously; the superior may not excuse but he can lament the ignorance or lack of civility in the person who assails him. There are times, too, when language used by a superior to an inferior should not be too strongly resented by the latter, for there may be circumstances unknown to him which warrant his superior in taking the course that he does, and which would preclude him from explaining. Where the parties are of equal rank and social position, these qualifications do not apply. In making my decision in this matter, I have considered that I am dealing with equals."

Both Colonel Burr and Judge Van Ness appreciated the distinctions mentioned by Swartwout, but neither by word nor look did they intimate to him whether his decision was correct or otherwise.

"To the first inquiry propounded by Judge Van Ness," said Swartwout, "I decide that the language used was outside of the latitude which is considered allowable in political contests. I mean by this, it was not allowable to use it in the way in which it was used. If it had been printed in a newspaper, with the author's name attached, or if it had been spoken from the hustings by the orator himself, it would not have been so reprehensible, but used in the manner in which it was, it savors of and reminds one of those days in the history of Venice when bravos, with masks upon their faces, stole up behind their victims and stabbed them in the back. In deciding the second inquiry, I am necessarily much influenced by my answer to the first. The language being a covert attack; made from under cover, as it is, requires both an explanation and an apology. If,—but the testimony submitted does not settle that point,—the party who wrote the letter containing the language complained of, did it at the suggestion of the one who now becomes the principal in the affair, the necessity of a full explanation and ample apology is more than ever apparent.

"My answer to the third inquiry must be in the negative. I do not find in the letters written by Colonel Burr's antagonist, or by the latter's second, any intimation of a willingness to explain or apologize for the language complained of in Colonel Burr's first communication. I notice a marked determination to avoid that question and to make it appear, as shown by his first reply to Colonel Burr, that Colonel Burr has asked for a great deal more than he really did ask for in his first letter. Then, having set up this statement of affairs as though it had emanated from Colonel Burr,

he proceeds to refuse to accede to it; in other words, instead of answering Colonel Burr's express inquiry, he greatly enlarges the inquiry, and then refuses to reply to the inquiry which he has himself enlarged. Again, having apparently justified himself in his own mind for not answering fully a wide inquiry, when the request had been that he would answer a simple one, he intimates that if Colonel Burr is not satisfied with the answer he has made to an inquiry which Colonel Burr had *not* made of him, that he is prepared to bear the consequences. This latter language I can interpret in no other way than to mean that if Colonel Burr challenges, he will accept the challenge.

"Under these circumstances, it becomes easy for me to answer the fourth question, although I must say I make the decision with great reluctance. Of my own free will, I would be the last man to advise my friend, Colonel Burr, to imperil his life when the future has, I hope, so much of greatness and happiness in store for him, but I fancy that Colonel Burr has already made up his mind. If he is determined to challenge his antagonist, and my opinion agrees with his, I cannot blame myself if my decision results in a duel. If, on the other hand, my opinion should run counter to his, there will be some hope left that further discussion and consideration of the matter may result in an amicable adjustment. I will not ask Colonel Burr if he has reached a decision, but will simply declare that, in my own mind, he is fully warranted in sending a challenge to the person who is known only to me by the offensive language which he has used to my friend, and for which, in my opinion, he has refused that reparation which a gentleman of honor should have willingly offered."

Van Ness sprang to his feet and grasped Swartwout by the hand.

"John," he cried, "you have mistaken your vocation. I never listened to a better summing up of a

case and a more lucid and just decision from the bench in my life. You should have been a judge. You are better fitted to sit on the bench than I am."

"Thank you, judge," was the reply, "I have tried to do my duty to my great friend, Colonel Burr."

"And you have succeeded, Swartwout," cried Burr, as he in turn grasped his friend's hand and shook it warmly.

"But you have not told me," said Swartwout, "does my decision agree with the conclusion to which you two gentlemen have come?"

"Exactly!" answered Van Ness. "I delivered the challenge this morning, and the meeting was arranged for Wednesday morning, at seven o'clock, at Weehawken Heights. You must come with us, John."

"And Colonel Burr is to meet ——"

"General Alexander Hamilton," said Van Ness.

Swartwout remained speechless for a moment, then he said in a slow, deliberate manner,

"Colonel Burr, if you should be so unfortunate as to kill General Hamilton, it would not avenge one-tenth of the injuries that you have suffered at his hands since you first knew him."

CHAPTER VIII

HUMAN TIGERS

THE pistol-shot had been fired from the top of the mountain as Cheetham had suggested. That pistol-shot was Doctor Cooper's letter which duly appeared and was widely copied by all the newspapers antagonistic to Colonel Burr. That Burr had not seen it sooner was due to his peculiar nature. He cared nothing for the attacks made upon him by his political enemies, and even after reading the extracts from Doctor Cooper's letter, enclosed by Judge Van Ness, he would have dropped the matter had it not been for the statements contained in the deposition taken by Van Ness from the lips of the dying man, and officially attested by the judge himself. The dreadful consequences of that pistol-shot from the mountain top are yet to be realized.

Cheetham, as he had agreed, did his work in the depths of the valley. He carried out his promise to the letter. Bitter invectives against Colonel Burr appeared in each issue of the American Citizen. On election day, at every polling place throughout the State, the promised handbill was displayed, and the coarseness and brutality of the language have never been surpassed in any American election contest. Many would-be, but faint-hearted, supporters of Colonel Burr were terrified by this onslaught. Burr's friends could only deny and denounce it verbally; there was no time in which to counteract its effect by printers' ink, that most potent agent in political affairs.

The result is well known. Burr polled twenty-eight thousand votes while his competitor had thirty-five thousand, or a majority of seven thousand. A change of thirty-six hundred ballots would have made Aaron Burr governor of New York and the next president of the United States! More than that number of voters who had intended to vote for Colonel Burr were undoubtedly influenced at the last moment by this false and libelous handbill to cast their ballots for his opponent. As Cheetham had truly told Hamilton, the God-fearing farmers rallied to the support of the home when so direct an assertion was made that its purity was menaced.

When the result of the election was definitely announced to Burr, he accepted it with his usual equanimity. He thanked his friends for their earnest efforts in his behalf, but neither by voice nor pen did he express any opinion of, or resentment for the disgraceful tactics of his opponents. To his daughter Theodosia, who was in South Carolina, he wrote simply: "The election was lost by a large majority. *So much the better.*" When he penned those last words he had, undoubtedly, in his own mind, renounced all hope of future political preferment in the United States. But for that pistol-shot from the mountain top, and the deposition of the dying man, Colonel Burr would probably have renounced politics, have given all his time and attention to his profession, and have lived and died an honored and respected citizen. Oh! the irony of fate, when such base tools as Cheetham can so easily change the course of human events and so greatly affect the history of a mighty nation.

General Hamilton's country house, "The Grange," was in those days considered to be far out of town. At the present time, it would still be up town, having been located on what is now called Convent Avenue, between 142nd and 143rd Streets. On the morning

of the tenth of July, the day before the duel, General Hamilton might have been discovered, attired in a suit of homespun, at work in his garden. With the help of his gardener, he was engaged in setting out a row of thirteen gum trees to commemorate the thirteen original States in the Union.

Those little saplings flourished and waxed strong and became mighty trees. For nearly a century they stood, giving shade and shelter to weary man and tired beast. In the summer of 1899, it was decided that they stood in the way of contemplated real estate improvements and they were obliged to succumb to the axe and the cross-cut saw. But although the trees have fallen, the Union, of which they were the symbol, still lives; although the man who planted the trees was never satisfied with the form of government which he had done so much, in spite of himself, to provide; and although he never imagined nor wished that the original American Constitution would outlast his own lifetime, the Union still survives.

While engaged in the pleasing and honorable work of arboriculture, his ear caught the sound of an approaching vehicle, and looking up, he saw that his visitor was the man, whom, least of all, he desired to see. It was Cheetham. Turning to the gardener, Hamilton gave him some directions in a low voice, and the man trudged off toward the barn.

"Glad we are alone, General," said Cheetham, alighting from his chaise, and approaching his political master. "I haven't had a good chance to congratulate you since election day. That handbill did the work, didn't it? I suppose that letter of Cooper's was your little pistol-shot. Well, I think we both ought to be proud of the fact that we have driven Burr out of the field and need fear no further harm from him."

Approaching Cheetham still closer, Hamilton asked

in a low voice, "Can you keep a secret for twenty-four hours, Cheetham?"

"I can if I'm paid for it," said the mercenary scoundrel with a cunning leer in his face.

"The fact that you are the only one who possesses the secret will be worth a great deal to you in twenty-four hours."

"Agreed," said Cheetham.

Hamilton continued: "You are wrong, Cheetham, in thinking that Colonel Burr has lost all power to harm you and me."

"What's he up to now?" queried Cheetham, somewhat apprehensively.

Hamilton replied solemnly: "That pistol-shot from the mountain top means more pistol-shots upon the field of honor."

"Great God!" cried Cheetham, "has Burr challenged you?"

"We meet to-morrow morning," replied Hamilton, "that is the secret you must swear to keep, Cheetham," —he looked at his watch—"until ten o'clock to-morrow."

"I swear," said Cheetham, "but, General, I envy you your possibilities. If I could but take your place, I would do it willingly. If I could rid the earth of Aaron Burr, I should be satisfied."

"If you got well paid for it," said Hamilton, with a laugh; but seeing an ugly look creeping over his visitor's face, he added, "Pardon me, Cheetham, it was but a pleasantry, but an untimely one. If I die at Colonel Burr's hands, I shall expect you to avenge my death."

"You may depend upon me, General," said Cheetham, somewhat gloomily, as he shook hands with him. Then he jumped into his chaise, turned quickly about, and drove at a violent pace from the grounds. As he neared the gate, he was obliged to pull up quickly in

order to allow the ingress of a chaise containing another visitor. Cheetham recognized Van Ness and Van Ness knew Cheetham. Neither of the men bowed nor spoke.

At a safe distance from the house, Cheetham soliloquized: "If Burr kills Hamilton and I kill Burr, then Van Ness will kill me. No; I think I'd better stick to my printing office and my paper and let these fools of politicians do their own fighting. What an ass Hamilton was to drag Cooper into this business. He might have written it himself, as he has done so many times before, and never been found out."

Hamilton awaited the approach of Van Ness, whom he had recognized. As Van Ness pulled up his horse, the General asked with an evident attempt to adopt a familiar tone, "You met Cheetham as you came in?"

"I was obliged to pass him," replied Van Ness coldly.

Hamilton, seeming to think some explanation necessary, continued: "Cheetham saw me at work in the garden and drove in to see what I was about."

"These inopportune meetings are often as advantageous to all parties concerned as prearranged ones," rejoined Van Ness, while a sarcastic smile played over his features.

Hamilton instantly assumed an air of severe dignity as he said, "Our present meeting is not opportune and certainly not prearranged. Under the circumstances, I had a right to pass this day undisturbed. I presume you have come from Colonel Burr."

Van Ness, who had alighted and approached Hamilton, replied, "General, I come here of my own free will, without the knowledge of Colonel Burr."

Hamilton again drew himself up and with great dignity said: 'I am not aware that there is any reason why I should listen to any personal communication from Mr. Van Ness. My controversy is with Colonel

Burr, and I have no desire to add to it an altercation with his second."

Van Ness was a man of marked force of character. There was in him a certain savagery born of his great physical strength and active temperament, and it was with difficulty that he restrained his temper when Hamilton concluded his speech, but with great exertion he did so.

"I think, General," he continued, "that I can give you a satisfactory reason why you should listen to my communication on my own account, irrespective of my connection with Colonel Burr. Did you ever know a person by the name of ——?" He did not speak the name aloud, but whispered it in a low tone. The name was distinctly audible to Hamilton who started back as though he had been shot.

"No," answered Hamilton, recovering himself, "I never knew any such man."

"Your actions belie your words," remarked Van Ness, while a cynical smile played upon his face. "Perhaps I can state the matter more truthfully if I say that you once knew him when he was of service to you, but that lately, when you do not need him, you have forgotten him."

"Let him remain forgotten then," replied Hamilton. "I have no desire to talk to you about him. If he wishes to see me, let him do so. I see no reason why you should become his spokesman."

"Well I do," remarked Van Ness, "for the very reason that he has no one else to speak for him; in fact, he cannot speak for himself for he has been dead nearly a week. I see that I have given you some pleasant news, General Hamilton. You are glad to learn that he is dead. Perhaps you remember those well-known lines, 'the evil that men do lives after them.' I am afraid it is so in the case of our friend. His past deeds, or misdeeds, to call them by their true name, no

doubt preyed upon his mind as his end approached, and he sent for Colonel Burr. He was a shrewd man, was he not, to send for Colonel Burr?" As he said this, a savage expression spread over his face. "He knew that you would not listen to him, General, and so he sent for our friend Burr. Unfortunately, the Colonel was out of town on an important law case, but the messenger said that a dying man wished to make a deposition and so he was advised to call upon me. Fortunate, wasn't it, General? I was in town, it so happened, and I went to take the deposition. It was most interesting. You ought to have been there. Things that you have forgotten long ago would have been called back to your memory, I have no doubt, but I remember them and it will give me great pleasure to refresh your recollection on any points that you may have forgotten."

Hamilton was speechless. What could he say? He knew the man; he knew him when he was in the army; he knew that he had been his tool, and that whatever he wished done in a secret way had been skilfully performed, and without price, for the man himself was well-to-do. He had not cared for money, but for political or rather official advancement; he was a man with a past, he desired to bury it, to outlive it, and by the closing acts of his life to secure a character and reputation by which he would be judged after his death. Hamilton had used him until he was of no further service to him. The financial troubles of the country had reduced the man almost to poverty, but Hamilton would not lift his hand to aid him in any way, in fact, he did not recognize him when they met. These thoughts flashed through his mind as he stood and looked vacantly at Van Ness. The latter spoke again.

"It is unnecessary, General Hamilton, for me to repeat to you the contents of that deposition, or the contents of many letters and private papers, or rather

copies of them, all of which the dying man placed in my hands. I have had the pleasure of looking them over with Colonel Burr, and I called to tell you, on my own account, that the duel which is to take place between you and my friend, Colonel Burr, could have been avoided if the reason for it had been simply the contents of Doctor Cooper's letter; but with the knowledge obtained from the lips of the dying man, you can see that Colonel Burr has abundant reason for meeting not one General Hamilton, but a dozen of them, if that number of such gentlemen could be found in the world."

There was a sting of sarcasm in the words and in the manner in which they were spoken. They cut Hamilton, and, turning to Van Ness, he said, his face livid with rage,

"Why do you say this? What do you mean to do with those papers? Are they to be published? But we cannot continue this conversation so publicly. We shall attract the attention of my family, and, as yet, they know nothing. Come with me to that summer-house and we will finish this matter."

The summer-house referred to opened upon a large lawn and was so situated that its occupants could not be seen from the windows of The Grange nor from the road. Van Ness tethered his horse and followed the General.

Within the summer-house were a long bench and two rustic chairs, one of which Hamilton took while Van Ness threw himself carelessly into the other. A soft breeze, perfumed with the odor of roses and other flowers, blew in the heated faces of the disputants. The same breeze agitated the mass of vines and creepers that covered and, in fact, made this retreat, and they danced merrily in the sunlight. Above and around them could be heard the songs of birds. Outwardly, all was peaceful, but within the hearts of the two men who

sat facing each other were passions worthy only of beasts of prey. Finally Hamilton spoke and repeated his former question.

"What are you going to do with those papers? Do you mean to publish them?"

Van Ness leaned back in his chair and said, "Calm yourself, General, that depends on this meeting that is to take place between you and my friend, the Colonel. There are many possible results. For instance, you might fire at each other a number of times and neither of you be injured. In such a case, I think it would be expedient to publish the papers. Your friends, you know, General, will claim that Colonel Burr desired to meet you because you are his rival; that he has a dislike for you based upon no good foundation. I think the publication of the papers will convince the public that Colonel Burr is justified in seeking a meeting with you. Now it may occur," continued Van Ness, "that as a result of the encounter, Colonel Burr may be wounded, not mortally; it may be only slightly, or perhaps, seriously. In either case, I think the publication of these papers is demanded for reasons already given. It may be, which God forbid, that my friend may fall at your hand; in such a case, left to my own view of the situation I should publish the papers. The vindication of the character and reputation of my friend would require it. Now let us look at the other end of the field. It may be that you may be slightly or seriously injured at the hands of Colonel Burr; in such a case, publication of the papers would seem to be demanded as a justification for the action taken by Burr in forcing a meeting with you. Now let us suppose that you fall."

"In such a case Colonel Burr would, no doubt, consider that the publication of the papers was needed for his justification," cried Hamilton.

"There you are wrong, General," continued Van Ness, "as you usually are when you attempt to divine the probable course of conduct of a true gentleman. In such a case, Colonel Burr has assured me, that the deposition and papers will be sealed up, deposited with some responsible and reliable person, and that the eyes of no one of the present generation shall look upon them. In case of your death at his hands, he will ask for no justification in the eyes of the public."

Hamilton sank back into his chair. This was not what he had anticipated. As Van Ness had stated, it was impossible for a nature like his to truly estimate the probable action of a gentleman actuated by a fine sense of honor in a position like this. He felt his situation keenly. Van Ness arose.

"Can I bear any communication from you to my friend, Colonel Burr?"

"No," replied Hamilton, decisively.

Van Ness reached the door of the summer-house. "I will not detain you longer, General, because I think you should have the remaining time in which to attend to your personal affairs; for, let me say it, I do not believe a just Heaven will allow you any longer to continue the anonymous, secret, scurrilous, and mean attacks that for twenty years you have made upon the character of my friend, Colonel Burr. I am now going to call upon your friend, Mr. Pendleton," and with these words he bowed and quitted the place. In a few moments the sound of his retreating vehicle was heard.

Hamilton arose and paced up and down, his hands clenched, and with a look upon his face which no living man had ever seen there before.

"My God!" he cried, "it will be best that I should die at his hands." Then a smile came over his face. "But if I meet a physical death, I will leave behind that which will prove his political ruin. I am a doomed man, but so is Aaron Burr."

That he kept his word will be seen from the contents of the letter to the American public which he wrote that night, and which was found in his desk after his death.

CHAPTER IX

LOVERS AND ENEMIES

THE morning of July 11, 1804, dawned bright and beautiful. The rising sun bathed both banks of the Hudson River with its refulgent light. On the East its rays lay upon the city of New York, once proud of its Dutch settlers, later on prouder still of its British victors, and now prouder than ever of its American conquerors. The lower part of the city was thickly settled, indicating that the mercantile and shipping business was concentrated in that quarter. Farther up the island were thousands of acres of well-tilled land dotted here and there with humble cottages, more pretentious houses, and commanding looking mansions. It was in reality a city in the country.

On the western side of the river, a different picture met the eye. There were not those indications of a populous community. The hand of man had not transformed the face of Nature to such a marked extent as it had done on the eastern side. To be sure there were indications of future municipalities, but they were in the shape of small and irregularly laid out towns not worthy, as yet, of the name of cities.

About three miles above one of these sparsely-settled communities known by its old Dutch name of Hoboken, rose a tall line of cliffs mounting at least one hundred and fifty feet into the air, rejoicing also in a Dutch cognomen—that of Weehawken Heights.

The same rays from the morning sun that lighted the face of Nature and the handiwork of man, fell also

upon that embodiment of God's highest form of workmanship—a beautiful young girl. She was standing upon a projecting crag that hung over the rapidly flowing river, with her face turned towards the East. She had been called beautiful, and she was so in a certain sense. It was a physical beauty more than a combination of the physical with the mental and spiritual. She had a lithe and well-developed figure. Her cheeks were ruddy with the glow of health; her hair was dark brown, so dark, that the portions thrown into shadow seemed almost black. There could be no doubt about the color of her eyes. They were assuredly black and full of a fire that in moments of excitement showed that she could be the truest of friends, or the most determined of foes. In complexion she was a brunette. Her lips were full and red, the lower one showing a slight scar which extended into the flesh below, contracting the lip somewhat and giving it a peculiar expression when, from any cause, the lips were firmly set together. She was plainly dressed in what in those days was called a calico gown. She wore no hat. Behind her, standing on a rock, was a pail full of milk. Her position in life may, perhaps, be divined from this circumstance. Yes, she was but a milkmaid; a servant in the family of Captain Horatio Clarke who lived in the farm-house situated nearest to the point where she was standing. In fact, this point of land and hundreds of acres in every direction therefrom formed part of the estate of that old Revolutionary veteran. He was a widower with one son, Frederic Clarke.

The old captain was a man of the most irascible temper. It had brought him into many serious broils and entanglements during his long career. He had been a participant in several duels which, fortunately, had not ended seriously to either party. In his old age, however, the captain showed a most marked antipathy to the custom of duelling and to those who engaged in it. He

had instilled his newly-formed principles into his son who took his advice and admonition as though they had formed part of the Book of Books.

The old captain was also noted for his extreme political likes and dislikes. In his eyes, George Washington and Alexander Hamilton were incarnations of all that was great and good in man, and he placed them side by side on the same pedestal. On the other hand, he looked upon Aaron Burr and his political friends as the arch enemies of the country whose ambition was to ruin it for their own selfish ends. These political ideas had also formed part of Frederic Clarke's education, and hardly a week elapsed that the young man was not obliged to submit to a political catechism to see if he was still strong in the faith.

While the young girl, whose portrait has been drawn in some detail, and whose name was Kate Embleton, was still gazing out upon the river, somewhat abstractedly, and unmindful of the errand upon which she had started, a young man emerged from a small grove of trees about a hundred feet from where she stood, and looked earnestly in every direction. Standing where she did, Kate Embleton was shrouded from his gaze.

Satisfied that the object of his search was not in sight, the young man, who was Frederic Clarke, said aloud, for he was not afraid to have the birds whose songs were heard about him hear his declaration of love,

"Where can she be? Can I have missed her? I have grown to love that girl in spite of myself, and I pass the day in thinking of the joy of seeing her alone in the morning. Perhaps I am too early. I will look up the road."

This young man who had gone in search of some young lady with whom he was, by his own declaration, in love, was tall and finely proportioned. He, like Kate, was dark, even swarthy. His hair was unmis-

takably black, and he, too, had a peculiarity in his personal appearance somewhat akin to the slight scar on Miss Embleton's lip. In his case, however, the peculiarity took a different form and consisted in the complete union across the bridge of the nose, of his black and bushy eyebrows. This showed him to be a young man of strong character; one full of determination, and one likely to be a fierce antagonist in either argument or action.

A moment after Frederic had gone to continue his search up the road, Kate, who was either satisfied with her view of the beauties of the morning or had remembered her almost forgotten duty, entered upon the little clearing where Frederic had so lately stood. There must be a strong predilection on the part of lovers to commune with themselves when they are deprived of the society of the object of their affections. Kate, too, evidently, had no objection to the birds hearing the outpourings of her heart, for she soliloquized as Frederic had done:

"I have seen no signs of him this morning. Only a passing fancy of his I suppose. Rich farmers' sons don't usually make love to their fathers' servants—but this may be an exception. Frederic—I mean Mr. Clarke—seems to enjoy my company, and I don't suppose it would be ladylike to tell him that I don't enjoy his—it would be untrue anyway, for the weight of my day of toil is lightened by our cheerful morning conversations. He isn't coming, so I will keep on to Farmer Wilkins's."

As she said this, she again took up the pail of milk and started to finish her errand, but she was not destined to proceed on her way uninterrupted. She had taken but a few steps when Frederic dashed into the little clearing and cried,

"Kate! Kate!!"

The young girl turned impulsively as she heard the

tones of the well-known voice. Her lover continued:

"Good morning, Kate—and it is a lovely morning, isn't it? I was afraid I had missed you, Kate."

The young girl's face assumed an expression of either real or pretended dignity as she rejoined:

"Missed me? It would have been more polite if you had."

The young man laughed.

"Oh! you prefer to be called Miss Kate. I will try and be more polite. I will call you Miss Embleton if you will let me take your milk-pail and walk with you as far as the stile."

Kate drew back, holding the milk-pail beyond the reach of her lover's extended hand.

"I don't know as I shall allow any such thing. What would your father say if he saw you with the milk-pail on one arm——"

With a quick determined motion the young man stepped forward, and grasping the handle of the pail, took it from the young girl's grasp. She was evidently used to, and unable to resist his forceful ways. The young man completed her speech:

"And you on the other."

As he said this, he offered his arm which Kate took while a smile played over her face. The young man continued:

"My father is apt to take his choice expressions from Scripture."

The young girl looked up and asked, "What could he find to say to suit this occasion?"

Frederic replied: "Why, he could say scripturally, that his son was in a land with milk on one side"—as he said this, he held up the pail—"and honey on the other."

The young girl, either really or fanciedly, resented this familiar speech, and taking the pail from his hand said, somewhat petulantly:

"Give me my pail, Mr. Clarke. Keep such sweet compliments for your future wife."

The young man again grasped the handle of the pail in the same masterful way that he had before done, and placing it upon the ground he turned to the young girl and said:

"Kate, I want to talk to you, and no nonsense either. Real, true, hard facts, and I want your opinion. Come, Miss Kate, let us sit down."

He led her to a little grass-covered bank beneath the wide-spreading branches of a tree whose knotty trunk and gnarled limbs showed that it had long been a resident of this world, and from its great age was fitted to become the confidant of the lovers who sat beneath it. Kate spoke first.

"I don't know as a young girl like myself, your father's servant, should be the confidante of a rich man's son."

Frederic replied with a voice full of deep feeling: "You are the only woman who can answer my question, Kate. I had a long talk with father last night."

Kate said with a tinge of irony in her voice: "I hope you both enjoyed it. I rarely derive any pleasure from his conversations."

"It was pleasant," Frederic rejoined, "for a wonder. I told him I had decided upon my future course, either to marry"—at this remark Kate started involuntarily—"or go out and begin life for myself."

Kate looked up and asked inquiringly, "He thinks you had better go West, doesn't he?"

Frederic answered, "I think he might on general principles, but when I told him whom I wished to marry"—this remark indicating that his selection was already made caused the young girl to start again and to look up inquiringly into his face—"he said he would give me the Cushman Farm and a thousand dollars. What do you think of that?"

Kate replied somewhat sardonically, "Remarkably generous for him. But will she—the woman—you—what will she say?"

Frederic replied with a meaning smile,

"I am going to ask her."

The young girl turned her face away and said: "A very sensible idea. Take my advice and do it at once. Your father may change his mind. I,"— turning and facing him, having regained her composure, "I'm glad, Mr. Clarke, you have found a woman—whom you love, and," rising she took up the milk-pail, "I hope she will love you and make you a good wife."

As she said this, she turned her face away again. In her eyes were tears either of vexation or disappointment, but the young man did not see them. Then she added in a composed manner,

"I must go now, Mr. Clarke."

Frederic jumped to his feet, and grasped her disengaged hand. As he did this, he said with a voice full of pleasure, "Then you consent?"

Kate, evidently astonished, looked up. "I? What have I to do with it? You said you wouldn't talk nonsense."

Frederic cried impulsively, "And I won't, Kate. Father says you are a nice, honest, hard-working girl, just the one for his money—and he would give us his blessing—and Kate, what do you say?"

Kate took his arm and dropped her head upon his shoulder, a look of supreme satisfaction and contentment in her face.

"Come, Kate, I will take the milk-pail, for Farmer Wilkins may be waiting for his breakfast; but, remember, before we reach the stile you must say yes," he added, in that energetic way which was so natural to him.

Kate said gravely, "We will walk very slowly, Frederic, for it is a very important question to me."

Frederic leaned over and looked into her face. "And your answer will be very important to me, Kate."

He placed her arm in his, and pressing it close to him, they left the little glade, both apparently very anxious that Farmer Wilkins should not be deprived of milk at his morning meal.

When the two lovers had left the scene of their mutual confidence, the little glade seemed deprived of much of its brightness, but, if anything, the birds sang more sweetly than before, for they seemed to have been observant and interested listeners to what had transpired.

But a change was to take place. This sylvan scene which had been the abode of lovers was to become the resort of enemies. Their dreams were not of future love and happiness, but of immediate vengeance and death.

Two gentlemen came in sight and advanced rapidly towards the centre of the clearing. One, by his measured and determined movement, showed plainly that he had had military experience. Their names and their errand may be easily divined. It was Colonel Aaron Burr, accompanied by his second, Judge Van Ness. Van Ness broke the silence.

"We are here first, Colonel."

Burr replied: "I have always tried to be the first upon the field of honor, and the last to leave it."

"It falls to us to select the ground, Colonel. Shall we choose this, or look for a better place?"

Burr glanced at the little opening encircled by rocks and trees. Then he said:

"If I were sure I am to fall, I would choose this place to say my farewell to earth. My opponent may be more particular. We will look farther. If we fare no better we shall yet be sure of this."

Burr had taken a few steps when Van Ness grasped him by the arm:

"One word, Colonel, and pardon it from a man whom you know to be a good friend."

Burr grasped the hand that Van Ness extended:

"Van Ness, you have stuck closer to me than a brother. You may wring my heart and trample on my feelings and yet I shall be your debtor. Speak out, Van Ness, what troubles you?"

Van Ness continued in a somewhat deprecatory manner, "You know it is the usual custom for seconds to try and arrange matters without a recourse to arms."

Burr replied, while a look of determination played upon his face, "In this instance it will be a mere form. I——"

Without waiting for Burr to speak further, Van Ness asked:

"Why so? Suppose General Hamilton shows any disposition——"

Burr said in a decided tone:

"He will not. His attitude is the result of false pride and not of sober reflection. Even if his reason, as it must, condemned his treatment of me, his pride would force him to face me, and to refuse any reparation. That is not true bravery. A man should never be willing to die or cause the death of another from false pride."

Van Ness persisted, "Your words lead to what I was going to say, and that is, if General Hamilton should show a disposition to——"

Burr replied, courteously, "Pardon me, my dear Van Ness, but you will have no occasion to arrange a compromise, but if you should"—and he smiled incredulously—"you may proceed on this ground. You can say that Colonel Burr disavows verbally, as he has already done in writing, all motives of predetermined hostility, and will accept any reparation that will successfully refute the slanders from which he has suffered. I can do no more, nor less. Come, Van Ness,

let us not forget our duties as the committee of arrangements."

As Colonel Burr said this, the two gentlemen took a path leading to the left from the little glade, and were soon lost to view. The sound of the words last spoken had hardly died away when the two lovers who had jointly performed the young girl's errand, and had left the pail of milk at Farmer Wilkins's, once more entered the little sunlit glade. The little birds saw them and their songs which had been temporarily hushed, burst forth again as if in gladsome welcome.

Frederic looked out upon the river and said, "As we turned the bend in the road, I saw a boat at the little landing."

"Who can it be?" asked Kate with a smile. "There is no game here to shoot."

"Men who shoot here bring their own game—they make game of each other."

"Are you making game of me?" asked Kate, as her smile broke into a peal of laughter.

"No, far from it, Kate," replied Frederic gravely. "Within a hundred feet from where we stand, three years ago the son of General Hamilton was killed in a duel. A youth of twenty, brave but inexperienced, he fell the victim of the crafty skill of an adept duellist. I have heard within the last fortnight that a misunderstanding exists between his father, General Hamilton, and Colonel Aaron Burr. It is not improbable that they have come here to fight."

"It is horrible," said Kate with a shudder, "to think that the father may die upon the same field where his son fell a victim."

"That will never be," cried Frederic impetuously. "A righteous Heaven will never allow such a patriot as Hamilton to fall by the hand of Aaron Burr, a man who ruins a friend with as little feeling as he would an enemy."

Kate rejoined, "I always thought he had most devoted friends."

"Yes," said Frederic, "among the women of society; but the men all hate him."

Kate asked with a smile, "That isn't the reason why the men all hate him, is it?"

"What reason?" asked Frederic somewhat angrily.

"Why, because the women are such good friends of his?"

"Don't be silly, Kate. I revere General Hamilton, I hate Colonel Burr, and I could never be friendly with anyone who took his part."

"You are unreasonable," replied Kate, the look in her eye showing her disagreement with the speaker's last remark. "Suppose I should say that I thought Colonel Burr was a handsome man and a brave soldier?"

The young man replied with great anger:

"I should allow his good looks, but deny his bravery. Why," and his voice rose as his feelings overcame him, "he was the silent enemy and detractor of Washington who would not advance him because he had no confidence in his integrity, and General Hamilton says to-day that Colonel Burr is a man not fit to be trusted."

Kate, evidently disposed to continue the argument, exclaimed with animation, her bright eyes flashing,

"Somebody must trust him or he could not be Vice-President of the United States, and he must be a brave man for I have read that when General Richard Montgomery was shot on the Plains of Abraham before Quebec, 'Little Burr,' as they called him, took the body and carried it from the battle-field amid a shower of bullets. It took a brave man to do that," she added satirically.

"He should engage you to plead his cause," rejoined Frederic angrily, as he knitted his heavy eyebrows.

"Your eloquence is almost overpowering, but it doesn't change my mind. I think Aaron Burr is a villain and no honest woman should think otherwise."

"But women like villains sometimes, when they are handsome and brave," Kate replied, noticing his excitement but seeming disposed to provoke him still further.

Frederic was silent for a moment and then said with a marked air of determination both in his face and voice:

"Before I marry you, I shall expect you to agree with me on this point or we shall certainly quarrel."

Kate's womanly nature rebelled at this statement of an alternative and with a determination equal to his own, she responded:

"And before I marry you, I shall insist upon your respecting my feelings, and I, for one, think Colonel Burr is as good in his way as General Hamilton is in his way."

A look of astonishment passed over Frederic's face. He looked at the girl who stood facing him in a defiant manner:

"Kate, I am surprised. I won't be cross with you, but I should hesitate before marrying a woman who saw anything in Aaron Burr's life or character to admire."

The young man had taken the course, as inexperienced young men often do, that was destined to lead to further trouble instead of to a reconciliation. These two impetuous natures were like steel and flint, and this argument was the tinder that had caused the flame. The girl said impulsively, but decidedly:

"Then you had better hesitate, for I will never marry you until you change your mind about Colonel Burr."

Thus she flung down the gauntlet. The whilom lovers now stood upon the brink of a quarrel which,

if only a little rift, may be followed by a make-up in a minute, or an hour, or a day,—but which may cause a chasm that it will take years of suffering and repentance to bridge.

The young man said:

"That will never be. I love you, Kate, but you must leave politics to me and be satisfied to take my judgment of our public men. I know about them; you are only governed by a false sentiment. Come, Kate, let us stop arguing and go home."

"I prefer to stay here," said Kate, obstinately.

Frederic, repenting somewhat, continued entreatingly:

"Kate, I ask you, if you love me, to come with me to father's and I will tell him you have consented—the farm and the money will be ours. Come, Kate."

"I want to sit down and think it over. I can't agree to give up my honest convictions without a little fight with myself."

Frederic replied, his anger mounting again:

"I ask you once more, and for the last time, to come with me. If you do not, I shall tell father I am going to Ohio—that you have refused me."

"Then he will drive me out of doors for daring to refuse you—the rich farmer's son," Kate cried, passionately.

Frederic put the question once more, grimly, his suppressed passion showing itself, however, in his face. "What shall I say to father?"

Kate, averting her face, said quickly, "Tell him you are going to Ohio."

Then the young man, as is often the case, lost control of his feelings, and forgetting the courtesy due to woman cried:

"I will take you at your word. Farewell, Kate, farewell. I leave you to the kind attentions of your friend, Colonel Burr."

After delivering this discourteous and ungentlemanly speech, he stood for an instant and looked at the woman for whom he had professed an undying love less than an hour before. She knew that he was standing there; she knew that she had but to look up and speak some reassuring word and the clouds would leave his face; but she could not speak the word at that moment. He had stated the case too strongly. If he meant what he said, if she became his wife, in all matters of judgment she must bow to his presumed superior knowledge. She was but a poor American girl and a servant; but from her savings she had purchased candles and books and, in the solitude of her little room at night, when the rest of the household were wrapped in slumber, she had read, pondered, and formed her judgments; and she was, in fact, much better fitted to express a dispassionate view of men and things than her lifetime critic and mentor, as her lover would be, if she became his wife. She knew this, and the American spirit within her would not allow her to give up her honest convictions in the future for the sake of her present love. So she did not speak the word which the young man evidently expected.

He turned upon his heel and left the glade. There was no song of birds now; instead, a passionate, impulsive, grave young woman who, as she heard her lover's departing footsteps, threw herself upon the mossy bank where so short a time ago he had spoken the words which filled her heart with joy, and burst into a flood of tears, that last and most effective resource of women in sorrow.

While Kate was thus relieving her overwrought feelings, Colonel Burr and Judge Van Ness returned from the survey that they had been making of the adjoining territory. As they entered the glade at a point the farthest removed from the weeping woman, Burr observed:

"Well, Van Ness, I think that after all this is the best location. We shall both be free from the intrusion of the sunlight."

While speaking he had continued walking, which action disclosed Kate to view.

"What!" cried Burr, "a Niobe in tears? No, a nymph."

When Kate heard the words she looked up, and at sight of her beautiful, tear-stained face, Burr walked rapidly to her side.

"My dear young lady, can I be of service to you?"

Kate sat erect. "No, sir."

Burr bowed, courteously, and said in his most polite manner:

"Allow me to tender my sympathy and my aid—if you refuse both I shall feel aggrieved."

Kate looked up into the stranger's face and saw a most marvellous pair of piercing black eyes which, it seemed to her, had already read her face, but she said:

"It is nothing to interest a stranger. It was a foolish affair anyway—but it was all his fault."

"Ah!" cried Burr. "I divine—a lover's quarrel. Is the other lady as pretty as yourself?"

Kate pouted and replied, "It wasn't about a lady—it was about a man."

Burr seemed momentarily, at least, to have forgotten the serious errand which had brought him to the place. In fact, at any time a lovely woman in distress would have banished all other thoughts from his mind. Entering fully into the spirit of the occasion he continued:

"Two strings to your bow! Why should you cry? Have you lost them both?"

Kate had dried her eyes by this time, but a look of sullen determination had settled upon her face. She sat with her hands tightly clapsed and spoke in a slow, emphatic manner.

"The man we quarreled about, neither of us have

ever seen. He called him a villain and said he would marry no woman who spoke well of him."

Van Ness, who had held aloof up to this time, now approached. He had overheard the entire conversation, but for the first time now took part in it.

"Who was the villain of whom you had such a good opinion? He must be a favored rascal when a lady prefers to worship him in secret to having a lover in her own right."

"Yes," cried Burr, "who is this precious fellow who thus invisibly charms the fairest of her sex?"

As Burr said this, with all the grace and delicacy of a courtier he bowed, and taking Kate's hand in his he pressed his lips to it. As he raised his head he fixed those wonderful eyes upon her face. Kate at first dropped hers before his gaze. After a moment's pause, she looked boldly up and met the inquiring glance. She answered the inquiry by saying in a firm voice:

"'Twas Colonel Aaron Burr."

As the name fell from her lips Van Ness cried:

"What? Burr? Well, why Miss——"

Burr glanced quickly at Van Ness, and the latter said no more.

"Van Ness, let me manage this. 'Tis too sacred to be made a joke of." This was spoken in an undertone.

Turning to Kate again, Burr inquired; and his voice possessed a sweetness that Kate thought she had never heard in any man's voice before:

"And you have never seen this Colonel Burr—this villain, as your lover called him?"

"No, sir. Have you? Is he so bad?"

Burr did not answer her direct question but asked one himself.

"Why did you defend him, if you were so ignorant of his character?"

"Because," said Kate, springing to her feet and speaking with an animation that she had not before

shown, "because it seems to be the fashion to abuse Colonel Burr and praise General Hamilton, and my heart always goes out to one who is under a ban."

Burr continued his questioning:

"Who are you—Miss—?"

"My name is Kate Embleton. I am an orphan and a servant for Captain Horatio Clarke, Frederic's father, but I shall have to leave the house now, as the father will never forgive my rejection of his son."

Burr raised his hands deprecatingly.

"You have not rejected him? The quarrel is not so bad as that, I hope?"

There was a flash of indignation in Kate's beautiful eyes as she answered this question, and the little scar beneath her lip grew blood red.

"I said I would never marry him until he changed his mind about Colonel Burr. But he said he would never change his mind. So it's all settled, I suppose."

Burr looked into Kate's face and upon his there was a new expression. It made her think of her own father who, years ago, when no doubt she was a naughty little girl, would call her to his side and reprove her gently but firmly for her wrong actions. As the words fell from Colonel Burr's lip, they reached her ears, but before her eyes was that picture of her father.

"My dear young lady, let me advise you. I know this Colonel Burr—in fact I am an intimate acquaintance. He is not such a bad man as they say he is—in my opinion—but he would be the last person to wish any lady to defend him, if, by so doing, she lost the love of an honest man. He would say, as I do, make up your quarrel—whether Colonel Burr is a villain or a saint should not trouble a happy home in Jersey."

Burr took a well-filled purse from his pocket and held it in his hand. Then he continued:

"I shall tell Colonel Burr the name of his fair defender, and in case you should ever need a friend, go to his residence at Richmond Hill in New York City, and send in your name. He will remember you and will——"

Burr hesitated. The words, "if he is living," passed through his mind but he did not utter them. Then he said:

"And he will befriend you. And allow me to testify his gratitude in a more substantial fashion with this purse in which you will find enough to give you a fine wedding."

As Burr extended the purse towards her, Kate drew back.

"But, sir, I ought not to take this money from you—an entire stranger."

Burr again bowed low, and said with a grace worthy of a cavalier:

"No, not an entire stranger. You have defended my friend Colonel Burr, and that makes you my friend."

As he said this, Burr placed the purse in Kate's hand. She looked up, inquiringly:

"And your name, sir?"

Burr again took Kate's hand in his and, bowing his head, kissed it for the second time. Then he said:

"Think of me only as your friend—for we shall probably never meet again."

Van Ness, who had been an interested but somewhat impatient listener to the conversation between his friend and the young woman, now stepped to her side.

"My dear young lady, go, at once. Pardon my words, but a matter of urgent business——"

Kate looked at him for the first time.

"I can imagine—there is to be a duel."

"Your woman's wit," replied Van Ness, "has hit the truth."

During this conversation, Colonel Burr had walked some distance away from them and stood with his back towards them. Pointing to him, Kate asked earnestly: "And will he—?"

"Yes," said Van Ness, "and as he told you, he may never see you again."

Kate persisted in her questioning: "And he is Colonel Burr's friend?"

"The closest and dearest one of them all."

As Van Ness said this, he turned and walked towards Colonel Burr. Kate sprang past him and touched Burr timidly on the arm. Burr turned quickly about. The young girl's face was full of animation and interest.

"Sir," she cried, "I am a woman and think duelling is but murder; but, if you are in the right, and I feel you must be, I hope we shall meet again."

As soon as she said this, she turned and walked swiftly away and was soon lost to sight.

"You see, Van Ness, a woman who has never known me defends me, and refuses to marry the man who spoke ill of me. Many a man has died without so pleasant a thought to take with him. But where can they be?"

"Let us take a little stroll along the river bank," said Van Ness, "we can see them before they land."

Burr assented, and the two gentlemen soon disappeared in the direction that Van Ness had indicated. They had no sooner left the little glade than two other gentlemen appeared upon the scene, advancing from an opposite direction. It was the other principal in the coming affair of honor, General Hamilton, accompanied by his second, Judge Pendleton.

"Is he here?" asked Hamilton.

"I saw him and his second but a few rods away on the river bank, as we reached the top of the hill," replied Pendleton. "It lacks but five minutes of the

hour—they will soon return. General, have you anything further to say to me?"

The General replied:

"No, my dear Pendleton, only to thank you for your zealous service, your unvarying kindness, your true friendship." General Hamilton extended his hand which Judge Pendleton warmly grasped.

"I have left in my desk a paper which, if I fall, I wish you to give to the public. Last night, in my study, alone with my Maker, I wrote the explanation of my being on this field of death to-day."

"Rest assured, my dear General, that your slightest wish is law to me."

"I know it, my good friend. Would that I could more fully requite such a friendship. This is my first and last duel, Pendleton. My relative situation as well in public as in private, enforcing all the considerations which constitute what men of the world denominate honor, impose on me, as I think, a peculiar necessity not to decline this meeting. The ability to be in future useful, whether in resisting mischief or affecting good, in these crises of our public affairs which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with public prejudices in this particular; but, should it please God to carry me safely through this emergency, I will never be engaged in a similar transaction." He raised his right hand. "It is my deliberate intention to employ all my influence in society to discountenance this barbarous custom of duelling."

As the General concluded, Pendleton asked anxiously, "but if it were possible to arrange a settlement?"

"It will not be," said Hamilton, with decision. "Burr's ruling passion is his ambition, and he means to step over my dead body into the President's chair. His prejudice against Washington arose from my advancement and the feeling that Washington trusted me

and distrusted him. He is implacable in his hatred of me."

Pendleton turned, for he heard the sound of approaching footsteps.

"They are here," he said in a low tone to the General; and taking the latter's arm they walked slowly to the farther end of the field.

CHAPTER X

THE FIELD OF HONOR

WHEN Colonel Burr and Judge Van Ness entered the little clearing which was to become the field of honor, they saw and recognized General Hamilton and his second, and raising their hats saluted them politely. This civility was acknowledged with equal courtesy. Then General Hamilton turned about, and, leaning his arm upon a large rock, looked out upon the beautiful river. Was this to be his last view of it?

Then he turned his eyes towards the North where, although it was not visible, he knew his happy home was situated. He seemed to see his loving wife engaged in her household duties, and his happy children either at their studies or at play. Was he ever to see again that happy home and those he loved and who loved him so well? A few short moments were to answer both these questions.

Colonel Burr sank upon the grassy mound where Kate was seated during his interview with her. A bit of cherry-colored ribbon which had formed some part of her attire, in some way had become detached and lay upon the grass at his feet. He reached forward, picked it up, pressed it involuntarily to his lips, then, passing it through a buttonhole of his coat, made it into a lover's knot. His attention was next attracted by the loud chattering of some birds in the trees above him. He looked up and saw that two of them were engaged in what appeared to be a mortal combat.

With all the deftness of two practised swordsmen they struck at each other and advanced and retreated as they assumed the offensive or defensive. Burr smiled as he looked at them. The birds of the air and the beasts of the field thirsted for each other's blood, even as man did.

Meanwhile the two seconds advanced simultaneously towards each other and met near the centre of the field. Van Ness spoke first.

"As the challenging party, it is my duty to suggest what is doubtless impossible, an amicable arrangement of the difficulties between the principals in this sad affair. Mr. Cooper stated in his letter—" as he said this he took a paper from his pocket, opened it and read. "'General Hamilton and Judge Kent have declared in substance that they looked upon Mr. Burr as a dangerous man, and one who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government.' To this he added—'I could detail to you a still more despicable opinion which General Hamilton has expressed of Mr. Burr.'"

To this succinct statement of the case Judge Pendleton rejoined:

"General Hamilton has declared that he could not deny charges so generally made, nor affirm them. He has expressed his willingness, if Colonel Burr would state in detail any charges, to acknowledge or deny them like a gentleman."

Both of the seconds had evidently read and re-read the correspondence between their principals, for its most expressive lines seemed to be engraven upon their memories. Van Ness recognized the General's own words as they fell from the mouth of his second and he on his part resolved to stick just as closely to the letter. So he replied:

"The remarks made by General Hamilton, Colonel Burr understands to have been of a general nature, and

no denial or declaration will be satisfactory unless it be general, so as to wholly exclude the idea that reports derogatory to Colonel Burr's honor have originated with General Hamilton, or have been fairly inferred from anything he has said."

Mr. Pendleton then asked the following question: "Can Colonel Burr point to one public utterance of General Hamilton's in which he has over-stepped the limits allowed in political discussion?"

"Colonel Burr," replied Van Ness, "would, I am sure, authorize me to say that secret whispers traducing his fame and impeaching his honor, are, at least, equally injurious with slanders publicly uttered."

To this Mr. Pendleton responded with spirit, "And I am equally positive that General Hamilton would never consent to become a sacrifice, and atone in his own person for the idle gossip of the members of a great political party naturally embittered by a partisan warfare."

Both gentlemen evidently recognized that further attempts to secure an amicable settlement were useless, for each walked to his principal and spoke a few words in a low tone. As Mr. Pendleton's words, whatever they were, fell upon his ear, Hamilton turned his head, gave a slight nod, and then once more fixed his gaze upon the rapidly flowing river, although his eyes were turned many times towards the North.

When Van Ness reached Colonel Burr he found that the latter had lighted a cigar and was leaning against the trunk of a tree, just back of the little mound upon which he was seated. As Van Ness began speaking, Burr took his cigar from his mouth, and carelessly flicked off the ashes. When his second concluded, he nodded his head several times and resumed smoking. He watched the tiny blue clouds as they rose slowly above his head and were wafted away by a gentle breeze that blew from the river.

Again the seconds met in the centre of the field of honor; this time not with peaceable intent, but to make careful preparations for the death or wounding of a fellow-being.

Pendleton took a Spanish-milled dollar from his purse and flipped it high in the air. As it was falling, Van Ness called out "Heads," but heads were not uppermost, and General Hamilton had won the choice of positions. Once more the silver disk was thrown into the air, and again Van Ness cried "Heads," but once more fate had decreed against him, for Pendleton had won the right to give the word.

Mr. Pendleton approached the General and announced the result. "I will stand here," replied Hamilton, indicating the space between the great rock upon which he leaned and a giant tree just opposite, the opening between being not more than four feet wide.

Van Ness sauntered up to Colonel Burr and remarked: "They won both tosses, the fates are against us, Colonel."

"So far," replied Burr, laconically.

Pendleton then placed a small rock at the point designated by General Hamilton. Next he proceeded to measure off ten full paces which brought him close to where Burr was sitting. Then he placed another rock, which he had in his hand, to indicate where Colonel Burr was to stand. Van Ness then paced the distance marked out to make sure that it had been correctly measured.

General Hamilton, being the challenged party, had the choice of weapons. Pendleton opened the case that he had brought with him, and disclosed a pair of pistols of beautiful workmanship. Van Ness looked at them admiringly. Then he took up each one and examined it carefully, cocking and snapping it.

"Are you satisfied?" asked Pendleton.

"Perfectly," replied Van Ness.

Then the pistols were loaded and primed, Van Ness taking one and Pendleton the other. As Van Ness started towards Colonel Burr he glanced hurriedly about. Not a person was in sight except the four so closely connected with this ever-to-be memorable affair of honor.

Mr. Pendleton then asked in clear and distinct tones, "Gentlemen, are you ready?"

As he heard the question, Colonel Burr threw away his cigar, sprang to his feet, took his position at the place which had been marked for him, reached out his hand for the pistol which Van Ness passed to him and examined the trigger and priming with a critical eye.

General Hamilton also turned when he heard the inquiry, but he had been gazing so long in one direction that he was somewhat dazed by the change in the light, and he did not appear to see the weapon which his second extended to him. Finally he perceived it and said in a slow, deliberate manner, "I beg pardon for delaying you, but the direction of the light sometimes renders glasses necessary."

He then drew forth a pair of spectacles and adjusted them. Pendleton handed him the pistol for the second time and asked, "shall I set the hair trigger for you, General?"

"No," replied Hamilton in a decided tone. Meanwhile Colonel Burr, having finished the examination of his weapon, stood in an easy, graceful, and expectant attitude.

"Are you ready, gentlemen?" Mr. Pendleton again asked. General Hamilton drew himself up and for the first time looked directly at his antagonist. In an instant, a great change had come over the latter. Up to that moment he had been the gentleman, the courtier, the man of silk and velvet and scented powder. Now he was the warrior. The man of iron with nerves of steel. He fixed those wondrous eyes upon his lifelong

foe and Hamilton felt their force and fire. He could not return that glance, so he closed his eyes to shut it out.

Doctor Hosack, the attending surgeon, who had been concealed from sight behind the huge rock beside which Hamilton stood, suddenly entered the little clearing and said in a low voice to Pendleton, "I have left some of my instruments in the barge; it will take me but a few moments to get them." Pendleton nodded. As Doctor Hosack turned to depart he cast a keen glance at each of the contestants. A moment later he disappeared from sight. For a couple of minutes, it seemed an eternity to Hamilton, the four men stood in suspense.

Judge Pendleton's clear ringing voice then announced the rules which were to govern the firing.

At the word "Present" the parties were to fire simultaneously; if either failed to fire, his opponent's second was to count one! two! three! and if he failed to fire on the last number, he was to lose his shot.

Then for an instant there was a deathly silence. Even the little birds ceased their chattering and looked with wondering eyes at the unaccustomed scene.

From the master's lips fell the terrible word, "Present!" Hamilton raised his pistol and it was instantly discharged. No human witness can ever prove whether he aimed at his antagonist or fired wildly into the air. One point is certain, he fired before Colonel Burr did.

The flash and the report startled the feathered denizens of the forest, and spreading their wings they flew swiftly away. Gathered upon a distant tree, they chattered vehemently at this disturbance of their peace.

Burr did not wait for the numbered count. At the sound of Hamilton's pistol, he raised his own and fired. His shot took effect. The instant General Hamilton was struck he raised himself involuntarily on his toes,

turned a little to the left, and fell heavily upon his face.

As the second report died away, two men appeared above the brow of the declivity which led down to the water's edge. One was Doctor William Hosack, the surgeon, who ran hurriedly to the field to learn whether his services were needed. The other was Duke, a gigantic negro boatman, who on more than one occasion had borne the dead and dying from this same bloody field.

When he saw General Hamilton fall, a look expressive of regret passed over Colonel Burr's face, and he took a step forward as though he intended to approach and speak to the fallen man; but Van Ness grasped him roughly by the arm, pulled him back, and said in a stern voice: "The surgeon and the boatmen are coming. You must not stay here. You will be recognized."

As he said this, he threw a long cloak over Burr's shoulders, opened an umbrella with which he had provided himself, and with it drawn down over their heads so as to completely screen their faces from view, they quickly left the field.

Mr. Pendleton raised the General from the ground and held him in his arms. By this time Doctor Hosack had arrived. He knelt beside the wounded man and looked into his face which was lined with evidence of suffering, and was as pale as death. Opening his eyes Hamilton recognized Doctor Hosack and said in a weak voice:

"This is a mortal wound, Doctor."

He then relapsed into a state of unconsciousness. The doctor felt for his pulse but it was not perceptible. He then placed his ear to the wounded man's mouth, but there was no sound of breathing. Opening his clothing, he placed his hand upon his heart, but its beating could not be felt. To all outward appearances the unfortunate duellist was already a dead man.

The doctor sprang to his feet. "Our only hope," he cried, "is to get him on board the barge at once." He called to Duke who had signalled his three companions, and the four bargemen lifted the body tenderly and conveyed it to the boat, Doctor Hosack leading the way, while Mr. Pendleton brought up the rear carrying the case of pistols and the General's spectacles which he had found upon the ground, and which had been broken by the fall.

Just as Pendleton prepared to take his first step down the steep declivity which led to the water, his arm was grasped by Van Ness.

"What does the doctor say?" the latter asked in a husky voice.

"That there is no hope," replied Pendleton. "I do not believe he will be alive when we reach the other side of the river."

Van Ness returned with the sad news to Colonel Burr who was waiting impatiently for tidings. After Colonel Burr had reached his boat he had expressed his intention of going back to the field himself so as to learn the exact condition of his late antagonist. But Van Ness had declared that such a course would be improper, and that it would be extremely foolish to allow himself to be seen by the boatmen. Van Ness, as a compromise, offered to go himself, and with this understanding, Burr consented to remain in the boat, shielded from gaze by the umbrella.

As soon as Van Ness returned, Burr's boat pushed off and he and his friends in a short time were once more in the great library at Richmond Hill.

When the barge containing General Hamilton had been a short time upon the water, he began to show signs of returning animation. Some attempts to breathe were noticeable. Next he gave a deep, heavy sigh. Doctor Hosack sprang to his side and bathed his forehead, neck, and wrists with spirits of hartshorn.

Some was inhaled, but he was unable to swallow. His eyes opened slightly and he glanced about. Then he said: "My vision is indistinct."

His natural vigor now began to assert itself. He breathed more regularly and there was a look of intelligence in his eye. He glanced at the case of pistols, and then looking up to Doctor Hosack, exclaimed: "Pendleton knows that I did not intend to fire at him."

Pendleton assured him that he had informed the doctor of this fact. He seemed much refreshed by the cool breeze from the river, and as the barge approached the shore he motioned to Pendleton who bent over him. "Let Mrs. Hamilton be immediately sent for," said he; "let the event be gradually broken to her, but give her hopes."

Mr. Bayard had seen the approaching barge and had divined the condition of affairs. When a landing was effected, a cot was in readiness, and on it the wounded man was borne by the four lusty bargemen through crowds of wondering and sympathetic spectators to the house of his friend. Fate had decreed that he was never again to see that happy home in the North, towards which his eyes had turned so wistfully but a short hour ago.

Satisfied that their enemies had left, the feathered songsters returned to their accustomed haunts in the trees which surrounded the fatal field. On the grassy mound at the foot of the great tree, where Kate had had her interview with the supposed friend of Colonel Burr, she was again seated. She had opened the purse and was counting the money which it contained. There were gold pieces and silver pieces, and she was astonished to find that they were worth nearly two hundred dollars. What a fortune—and for what?

While thus engaged, jingling the coins and looking at them with evident manifestations of delight, Frederic approached her. She did not hear him and did not

look up. It had happened that the full particulars of the duel, including the names of the combatants, had been learned by him. He knew that the man he had so revered had fallen a victim at the hands of the man he so despised and hated. He could restrain himself no longer, so he cried in a loud, stern voice:

"Woman, where did you get that money?"

Kate clutched at her treasure with both hands. She looked up, and seeing Frederic's dark, angry gaze fixed upon her, said defiantly: "He gave it to me."

"He?" cried Frederic. "Whom do you mean by he?"

"I do not think I am called upon to explain, but if you must know, it was one of the gentlemen who has just fought a duel. I am so glad he is safe. I saw him going down to the boat."

"Do you know who that man was?" asked Frederic.

"I don't know his name," replied Kate, "but I am sure he is a gentleman. He said he was a friend of Colonel Burr's."

"He was ever a liar and deceiver of women. That man was Colonel Burr himself!" Kate started back in astonishment. "Give me the money," cried Frederic, "and I will take it back to him at once."

Kate clutched the purse in her hand and put it behind her.

"Ah! I see," said Frederic sarcastically, "you have sold yourself body and soul. Come here!"

He grasped her disengaged hand rudely, and then dragged her to the spot where Hamilton had fallen.

"See that blood, Kate? It is the price paid by a man of honor to defend his good name, but that money in your hand is the price of your dishonor and the badge of your shame. Farewell, Kate, forever. You are not fit to be the wife of an honest man."

The girl threw her hands wildly in the air and then

fell senseless upon the ground, the pieces of gold, and the pieces of silver strewn about her. The birds above once more burst into a flood of melody, but she heard them not.

CHAPTER XI

AFTER THE DUEL

IT was the evening of the day of the tragedy. Myriads of stars scintillated, and a full moon shone in the heavens. Its bright rays fell upon the rushing river and formed a wondrous maze above it, while its surface beneath resembled the glare of silver or the glint of highly-burnished steel. It seemed as though fair Luna had with one grasp taken a thousand arrows from her crystal quiver and cast them upon the earth. The little moonbeams romped and played like elfin sprites upon the trees and shrubs and flowers that grew upon, or about, the field where the conflict of the morning had taken place. They lighted up the bright green of its carpet and showed some dark red stains upon the spot where the wounded man had fallen. From this scene of radiant light which fell upon sea and river, road and field, come to the lordly mansion, dark as Erebus, upon the summit of Richmond Hill.

In this great house but a single light was burning—a solitary candle which stood upon a large table in the great library. Although the master of the house had not retired to rest, the great candelabrum in the hall was not lighted. The servants, who had heard exaggerated rumors of the occurrence in the morning, had gathered together at the rear of the house and talked in low whispers with bated breath. Even the voice of the loquacious Peggy was stilled, and she had no word of condemnation, as was her wont, for her fellow-servants.

In his great armchair in the library sat the master of the house. The same picture that greeted his eyes early that morning, and which had been before them all day, was before them now. He saw again and again the form of the prostrate man, and heard his words: "This is a mortal wound." Of course the wound was mortal, for Hamilton had said so himself. Who could know so well as he. The master of the house had been alone for several hours. His friends, Van Ness, Swartwout, and Davis, had passed the greater part of the day with him, but all of them had gone down town to learn the latest intelligence. Would they never come back? Yes! there was a loud knock at the door. The servants had been informed that the master would open the door himself, if anyone called. He did so, and admitted Van Ness.

"What do they say?" asked Burr, as soon as they had entered the library.

"Your enemies say—" Van Ness began.

"Stop!" cried Burr, "I do not care to hear what my enemies say. What do my friends say?"

They seated themselves in the dimly-lighted room.

"Some of them say," remarked Van Ness, "that it is a righteous judgment, but that it has been deferred too long. Some say they are sorry that he is mortally wounded; it would have answered your purpose just as well if the injury had been slight."

"No doubt," said Burr, "but it was the decree of Fate. If I had actually tried to kill him, as I did not, I should probably have given him a flesh wound only. But go on, Van Ness."

"Some say," the latter continued, "that they wish the duel had taken place as soon as Cooper's letter appeared; that is, before election. They say that in such a case, if you had wounded Hamilton slightly, your honor would have been vindicated; his scandalous tongue and those of his myrmidons would have been

silenced, and then you would undoubtedly have been elected Governor of New York, and your way to the presidential chair assured."

"No doubt," said Burr again, "but Fate did not so decree."

"Then again," continued Van Ness, "if that tool of Hamilton's had only died a couple of months sooner and you had given me liberty to publish that deposition——"

"Hold, Van Ness," cried Burr. "The matter of the deposition has been settled finally. I never could have used it against a living antagonist, and I have provided that it cannot be used against a dead one. But is he dead? You have not told me."

"Not yet," Van Ness answered, "but the doctors give no hope. A couple of surgeons from the French frigates in the harbor came up this afternoon, but their decision was the same as that arrived at by Doctor Hosack. He will probably linger until to-morrow, but the end is certain."

"Is he in great pain?" asked Burr.

"They say he was," replied Van Ness, "until he was placed in bed in Mr. Bayard's house. Then Doctor Hosack was able to relieve him."

In a short time, Van Ness took his leave. Burr extinguished the candle, and, throwing himself upon a couch in the library, slept soundly until morning. It did not prove that he was a revengeful or hard-hearted man. He had been in battles when hundreds of men instead of one had fallen, and yet he had thrown himself upon the ground beside them, and, exhausted then as he was now, had slept throughout the night.

The master of Richmond Hill passed the day following the duel in writing letters to his daughter, his son-in-law, and to many friends in different parts of the country. The second evening came, and again the great mansion was dark except for the single light in

the library. That evening he had two visitors, Judge Van Ness and Doctor Hosack. The latter, who was a friend to both the participants in the fatal affray, had come at Van Ness's request to give Colonel Burr a correct account of the last hours of his antagonist.

"It was a most affecting sight," said Doctor Hosack, "when the General's wife and his seven children stood by his bedside. He could not speak, but he gave them a look which said as plainly as words could have done, 'I love you all; farewell.' Two clergymen visited him in his last hours. I left the room, for I knew he would wish to be alone with them. He died about half-past two this afternoon."

"What was the nature of the wound?" asked Burr calmly.

"A most peculiar one," the doctor replied. "The bullet struck him in the right side. It fractured one of the ribs and, in doing so, was deflected so that it continued its course through his body and finally lodged in the lumbar region. Had it not been for the fractured rib, the wound would have been a comparatively slight one."

Burr nodded his head.

"The funeral," said Van Ness, "is fixed for Friday."

The two gentlemen soon withdrew, and the victor of that terrible morning passed another night in the solitude of his library.

In the early part of the following week, the candelabrum in the hall was again lighted. A dozen candles were burning in the great library.

A little company had gathered to talk over the events of the preceding week. Among them were the ever-ready Van Ness, the always-faithful John Swartwout, M. L. Davis, and Colonel Troup.

The *ante-duellum* statement to which Hamilton had called Mr. Pendleton's attention on the morning

of the duel and which had been found in his desk, had been given to the press and was being discussed by the public. Van Ness had brought a copy with him, and, at Burr's request, read it aloud to the assembled company. It was addressed to the American people and read as follows:

"On my expected interview with Colonel Burr, I think it proper to make some remarks explanatory of my conduct, motives, and views. I was certainly desirous of avoiding this interview for the most cogent reasons.

"1. My religious and moral principles are strongly opposed to the practice of duelling, and it would ever give me pain to be obliged to shed the blood of a fellow creature in a private combat forbidden by the laws."

Here Van Ness stopped, and interpolated a remark:

"If the General was so opposed to duelling, why didn't he bring his parental influence to bear upon his son three years ago? Events have shown that the Hamiltons are not favorites on the field of honor."

Burr waved his hand, and Van Ness taking the implied hint continued his reading:

"2. My wife and children are extremely dear to me, and my life is of the utmost importance to them in various views.

"3. I feel a sense of obligation toward my creditors; who, in case of accident to me, by the forced sale of my property, may be in some degree sufferers. I did not think myself at liberty, as a man of probity, likely to expose them to this hazard.

"4. I am conscious of no ill-will to Colonel Burr distinct from political opposition, which, as I trust, has proceeded from pure and upright motives."

Here Van Ness stopped again. Burr rose from his chair, and walking to the window, looked out into the night. The discussion of the paper was evidently not to his liking, but he was equally averse to making

continued objections to such remarks as his friends might deem proper and pertinent.

"That's all nonsense," said Van Ness, "about his bearing no ill-will to our friend, the Colonel, except for political reasons. All his political ill-will he was at perfect liberty to express at public meetings, or in the public press; but when a man carries his political ill-will so far as to write letters to both friends and foes, secretly attacking the honor and abusing the character of his opponent, I think he goes too far to be allowed to shield himself behind the excuse of political opposition."

This sentiment evidently coincided with the views of those present, for they manifested their approval by affirmative nods. Then Van Ness took up the paper again and resumed his reading.

"Lastly, I shall hazard much, and can possibly gain nothing by the issue of the interview.

"But it was, as I conceive, impossible for me to avoid it. There were intrinsic difficulties in the thing, and artificial embarrassments from the manner of proceeding on the part of Colonel Burr.

"Intrinsic, because it is not to be denied that my animadversions on the political principles, character, and views of Colonel Burr have been extremely severe; and, on different occasions, I, in common with many others, have made very unfavorable criticisms on particular instances of the private conduct of this gentleman."

"Not only upon the private character and conduct of our friend here," broke in John Swartwout, "but upon the private character and conduct of many of the Colonel's friends. If his regard for morality and virtue was so marked, why did he not write a few letters in relation to the morals of some of the members of his own party?"

"That's so," added Van Ness. "A man who stands

as a tutor of morals should not confine his admirable lectures to his political opponents. Like an Irishman at a fair, whenever he sees a head he should hit it."

After this remark, the reading continued:

"In proportion as these impressions were entertained with sincerity, and uttered with motives and for purposes which might appear to me commendable, would be the difficulty (until they could be removed by evidence of their being erroneous) of explanation or apology. The disavowal required of me by Colonel Burr, in general and definite form, was out of my power if it had really been proper for me to submit to be so questioned; but I was sincerely of the opinion that this could not be; and in this opinion I was confirmed by that of a very moderate and judicious friend whom I consulted."

Burr turned his face from the window towards the company and asked:

"Have any of you an idea who it was he consulted?"

"I can't say positively," replied Colonel Troup, "it was either General Rufus King, or his son Doctor King."

"Both conscientious advisers," remarked Burr, as he turned his back again towards the company and gazed at the starlit sky. Again Van Ness continued:

"Besides that, Colonel Burr appeared to me to assume, in the first instance, a tone unnecessarily peremptory and menacing; and in the second, positively offensive. Yet I wished, as far as might be practicable, to leave a door open for accommodation. This, I think, will be inferred from the written communications made by me and by my direction, and would be confirmed by the conversations between Mr. Van Ness and myself, which arose out of the subject."

"Here I respectfully present an opinion," said Van Ness, "that General Hamilton had no right to issue a

post-mortem subpœna requiring me to appear as a witness in his defence. I am a friend of Colonel Burr, but if, after reading the correspondence between the Colonel and General Hamilton, and listening to the case as presented to me by Judge Pendleton, I had been of the opinion that General Hamilton was in the right, and Colonel Burr in the wrong, I should have come to Colonel Burr and have told him so, and should have declined to act as his second."

Again Burr turned from the window.

"And in doing so," he said to Van Ness, "you would have proved your true friendship. If you had come to me and told me that you thought General Hamilton was in the right, and that I was in the wrong, although my pride is great, I should have humbled it. I have no great reputation," Burr added with a smile, "as an apologizer, for the good reason that I have made it the rule of a lifetime never to speak or write ill of any man, whatever my private opinion might be."

Once more he turned to the window, and Van Ness again resumed the reading of the document.

"I am not sure whether, under all the circumstances, I did not go further in the attempt to accommodate than a punctilious delicacy will justify. If so, I hope the motives I have stated will excuse me.

"It is not my design, by what I have said, to affix any odium on the character of Aaron Burr in this case. He doubtless has heard of animadversions of mine which bore very hard upon him, and it is probable that, as usual, they were accompanied with some falsehoods."

"I am astonished," remarked Mr. Davis, "that he should have brought himself to acknowledge so much as that."

"Wait," said Van Ness, "you will find later on that it was the other fellow who told the lies. Listen——"

"He may have supposed himself under a necessity of acting as he has done. I hope the grounds of his proceeding have been such as ought to satisfy his own conscience.

"I trust at the same time, that the world will do me the justice to believe that I have not censured him on light grounds nor from unworthy inducements. I certainly have had strong reasons for what I have said, though it is possible that in some particulars I have been influenced by misconstruction or misinformation."

"I told you so," said Van Ness. "You see he says it was the other fellow who misinformed and misled him. Consequently he ought not to be blamed for repeating stories that were false, but concerning which he took no steps to ascertain their truth or falsity."

"It is also my ardent wish that I may have been more mistaken than I think I have been; and that he, by his future conduct, may show himself worthy of all confidence and esteem, and prove an ornament and blessing to the country.

"As well, because it is possible that I may have injured Colonel Burr, however convinced myself that my opinions and declarations have been well founded, as from my general principles and temper in relation to similar affairs, I have resolved, if our interview is conducted in the usual manner, and it pleases God to give me that opportunity, to reserve and throw away my first fire and I have thought even of reserving my second, and thus giving a double opportunity to Colonel Burr to pause and repent.

"It is not my intention, however, to enter into any explanation on the ground. Apology, from principle I hope rather than pride, is out of the question.

"To those who, with me, abhorring the practice of duelling, may think that I ought on no account to have added to the number of bad examples, I answer, that

my relative situation, as well in public as in private, enforcing all the considerations which constitute what men of the world denominate honor, imposed on me, as I thought, a peculiar necessity not to decline this call. The ability to be in future useful, whether in resisting mischief or effecting good in those crises of our public affairs which seem likely to happen, would probably be inseparable from a conformity with public prejudice in this particular."

"Well," asked Van Ness, as he concluded reading, "do you think that my comments have been unfair?" A general expression of negation came from his hearers.

"I forbear," continued Van Ness, "to comment upon the latter portion of this remarkable document. Like his speeches before the jury, it contains such a muddle of truth and falsity, mixed metaphor and verbiage, that I am really at a loss to understand just exactly what he means."

"I can put it in few words," said John Swartwout; "he knew in his heart that he had injured Colonel Burr; he knew if he made a general apology that it would damn him with his party. He knew that if he made a partial one that it would not be satisfactory to Colonel Burr, so he decided not to make any, but by his *post-mortem* statement to make it appear that the Colonel had forced him into this duel; that he had refused to receive what General Hamilton considered was a sufficient explanation. Then, to further prejudice the people against our friend, the Colonel, he poses as an opponent of duelling, at the same time confessing that if he doesn't fight, he knows that his friends will look upon him as a coward, and that his future career as a lawyer and politician will be injured."

"That is the whole thing in a nutshell, Swartwout," cried Van Ness. "Now there is but one point left, and that is the one where he expresses such a hearty

wish for Colonel Burr's political success. That is the one redeeming feature in the whole document."

As he said this, he folded it up and placed it in his pocket. When he had done so, Van Ness arose from his seat and joined Burr at the window.

"Colonel," said he, in a voice so low that the friends could not hear, "those present are your friends. I have a deposition in my pocket. Let me break the seals and allow your tried and trusted friends to know the whole truth of this matter."

"My dear Van Ness," said Burr, "this is the third time that I have told you that my disposition of that sealed packet is final."

He turned and advanced towards the company. Refreshments were ordered and the subject that had engrossed the early part of the evening was not again referred to. By ten o'clock the great mansion was once more shrouded in darkness.

The master of Richmond Hill remained in quiet seclusion for several days. He had no callers but his most intimate friends. Not a word of what was said by his enemies reached him, for his friends did not repeat them, and he read no newspapers; but on the ninth day after the duel he had a morning call from Van Ness.

"I have something disagreeable to communicate," said Van Ness, "yet I must tell you."

"If you must, you can," said Burr with a smile.

"The grand juries, both in New York and New Jersey, have brought in indictments against you for murder."

Burr did not turn pale, nor did a muscle of his face relax.

"I had expected it," he remarked, "but they will never bring me to trial."

"Of course not," added Van Ness, "but for a while, at least, I would suggest—"

"A temporary absence?" asked Burr.

"That is what I intended to say," assented Van Ness.

"I will think it over," remarked Burr, and let you know my decision this evening.

"By the way," added Van Ness, "I received a letter yesterday from Mr. Charles Biddle of Philadelphia. You remember him?" said he, interrogatively.

"Certainly," replied Burr, "he was Vice-President of Pennsylvania at the time Franklin was President. He has always been a good friend of mine, not so much, as I have fancied, on account of any personal liking, but because he was in accord with certain principles which he considered I represented. What did he say?"

"There are rumors in Philadelphia," continued Van Ness, "that your duel with Hamilton was not carried on exactly according to the rules which usually govern affairs of this kind, and Biddle wrote me to inquire if there was any truth in them. In reply, I gave him a complete account of the affair from the time when we arrived upon the field until it was all over. I am going to see Pendleton to-morrow and draw up an account to be signed by both of us and made public."

"That is a good idea," said Burr, "it will not have a great effect at the present time, but such events are part of history, and the historian of the future should have the truth of the matter."

"But, by your own act," said Van Ness, "you have given to your enemies an open field for fifty years after your death, during which they may affix a stigma upon your name which it may take another fifty years to remove."

"I cannot help it," replied Burr, "the packet is sealed and that matter is settled; but some day it will be opened and the truth will be known, and some historian will present the facts it contains to his generation, and then the attacks of my enemies will be silenced

forever. I can afford to bear misrepresentation and calumny for a century if those who live in the many centuries to follow know the truth. Did Biddle say anything else?"

"Yes," replied Van Ness, "he wrote that in talking to a Philadelphian several days ago, the latter remarked that he had had a conversation with General Hamilton when he was last in that city. During the interview, Hamilton spoke of the bitter partisan feeling that existed in Philadelphia between the two great political parties, and added that in New York party rancor was not carried to such an extreme extent. He instanced his relations with you as an example, remarking that although Colonel Burr and himself differed politically, socially they were the best of friends."

Burr said nothing. Not a muscle moved, nor did he show any inclination to make any comment concerning what Van Ness had just said. The latter continued:

"Biddle closed his letter to me in a way which cannot fail to please you, Colonel. It was this." He took a letter from his pocket and, after scanning several closely written pages, read the following:

"'I never knew Colonel Burr to speak ill of any man.'"

It was decided that, on the day but one following, early in the morning, Burr should become a fugitive and thus escape, for the present at least, whatever legal danger might be impending. Early that morning, he called the servants of his household together and bade them good-bye, saying that he was going South to visit his daughter and should not return to Richmond Hill until after the next session of Congress had closed.

The servants of the household had become acquainted with the real cause of his departure and it was not necessary for him to give a fuller explanation. He had shaken each by the hand and supposed the ceremony of leave-taking was over, when Peggy cried out:

"Yo' always liked yo' coffee jess so, an' yo' eggs biled jess so much; what is yo' goin' to do when yo' don't have Peggy to fix 'em fo' yo'."

As she said this, she began to sob and rub the tears from her eyes with her big black knuckles.

"I shall miss your cooking very much, Aunt Peggy," said Burr, "and shall look forward with pleasure to my return so that I can enjoy it once more."

This complimentary remark caused Peggy to dry her tears and sent a broad smile over her face. She looked around at the rest of the servants as much as to say: "Didn' I tole yo' so." Then John, the valet, spoke up:

"How are you going to get along, Master Burr," said he, "unless you have someone to brush your clothes and comb your peruke and look after you?"

"I shall miss you very much, John," said Burr, "but I mean to send for you as soon as I get back to Washington."

Now was John's time for self-glorification, and he looked at Peggy with a glance which she understood to mean: "Yo'se other folks ain't of no 'count noway."

Then Sam said timidly, "Don' yo' want a boy to carry yo' baggage?"

Burr smiled. He saw that each of his attendants was disposed to magnify his or her importance. But he could not blame them for this; for he had always taught them to be self-reliant, and to consider their work, however menial it might be in its nature, as of great importance to the good conduct of the great house.

"I should like to take you with me, Sam," he replied, "you may go across the river with me this morning."

Sam smiled, showing his white teeth, and the others envied him the opportunity he would have to be the last one to say good-bye to Massa Burr.

Burr then turned to them and said:

"While I am away, Peggy will have charge of the house. Mr. Van Ness will see her every day, or every other day, and you are to obey his orders the same as if they were mine, and when I come back I shall expect to get a good report about all of you."

"But ef yo' don' come back!" cried Peggy, explosively.

"In that case," Burr said, gravely, "I will see that you are all sent to South Carolina to live with my daughter whom I know you will serve as faithfully as you have me." He glanced out of the window. "My friends are coming."

At that moment, Van Ness entered the room. Burr took his arm and, followed by the good-byes and blessings of his retainers, the master of Richmond Hill left the great house in which Fate had decreed he should never set foot again.

CHAPTER XII

"I HAVE NO COUNTRY"

BURR made a rapid flight to the South. On several occasions he narrowly escaped recognition, which fact would undoubtedly have led to his detention and return to either New Jersey or New York, but his knowledge of military strategy, which had served him so well during his trip from Quebec to Montreal, and later on, when he carried the verbal despatch from General McDougal to General Washington, served him in good stead now. When he reached South Carolina, it was as if he had been taken from a loathsome dungeon and ushered into a beautiful palace, with the knowledge that all it contained was his. In every city and town the rich planters opened their doors and invited him to become their guest. Dinners, more pretentious banquets, receptions, and balls followed each other in quick succession. To a man of Burr's temperament, this adulation was exceedingly pleasing; but he retained during it all his outward serenity and composure of manner. He bore victory as he did defeat with the same outward measure of equanimity. From all parts of the South, letters reached him assuring him of sympathy, respect, and support. If, at this time, he had taken up his residence at the South and gathered about him the constituency which, of its own free will, had offered its assistance, the history of the United States might have been changed in a material degree.

When he started upon his way northward to attend

the closing session of the Eighth Congress, he received ovations in all the principal cities and towns, and his progress became a triumphal tour. On one occasion, the horses were taken from his carriage and he was drawn through the streets by the hands of his adherents, an honor which, of late years, has been accorded only to prima donnas.

At Richmond, when he entered the theatre, the audience rose in a body and greeted him with cheers. When he left, the same testimony of respect was paid him. A southern senator voiced the sentiment of the majority of the southern people, when he said, in a speech, that "the little Republican David hath slain the Federalist Goliath!"

The sentiment regarding him was entirely different at the North. The opinions of the press and clergy were, as a rule, fulsome commendations of Hamilton, and unmitigated condemnations of Burr. Volumes could be filled with the editorial and contributed articles in newspapers, and the sermons of the clergy. There may have been others, but there was at least one divine, who, in his consideration of the question, seemed to be an exponent of even-handed justice. This clergyman was the Rev. Samuel Spring, who, on the fifth of August, 1804, delivered a discourse before the North Congregational Society of the city of Newburyport, Massachusetts. He took for his text the sixth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill." After defining carefully the justifiable and unjustifiable kinds of homicide, he referred more particularly to the duellists.

Referring to the fact that Hamilton had not injured or killed Burr in the duel, the reverend gentleman said: "This is the essence of the crime; hence he who uses an instrument with a design to kill his neighbor, but fails in the execution in consequence of the interposition of Providence, is as real a murderer in the sight of God, if not of the civil law, as if his malicious pur-

pose were affected. The civil magistrate judges according to the visible act; but God according to the invisible."

The clergyman called attention to the notable reply, as he termed it, of a certain Colonel Gardiner, who, when challenged, replied: "I am not afraid to fight with man, but I am afraid to sin against God."

Referring to Hamilton's *ante-duellum* statement, found in his desk after his death, Mr. Spring said: "Will it not make more duellists than it will suppress? For it professedly furnishes reasons and motives to justify similar conduct in similar circumstances and conditions."

"The inference," said the reverend gentleman, "from General Hamilton's last statement is that he felt himself obliged to die with honor rather than to drag out his days in disgrace."

Mr. Spring then cited an historical parallel: "In the dominions of King Pharamond, first King of France, although duelling was contrary to law, it was sanctioned by custom, and no judge could be found who would punish a duellist who had killed his adversary. After one of these unfortunate occurrences, one of King Pharamond's subjects appeared before him and said: 'Excellent Pharamond, I had a friend, but he is dead and by my own hand. But though it was by my own hand, it was yet by the guilt of Pharamond. I have this moment killed in a duel the man whom I most loved. Pharamond has taken him from me. The merciful Pharamond destroys his subjects. The father of his country destroys his people. It is the guilt of Princes to let anything grow into a custom which is contrary to their laws. A court can make fashion and duty walk together. It can never be fashionable and honorable to do what is unlawful without the guilt of authority. But alas! in the dominions of Pharamond by the force of tyrant custom, styled a point of honor,

the duellist kills his friend and the judge approves his conduct.' "

Referring particularly to Burr, the clergyman said: "But let us pause; and with answerable exercises of heart remember that the parents and the grandparents of that notorious and stalking duellist were characters of the first distinction in point of abilities and Christianity."

This same Mr. Spring was chaplain of the ill-fated expedition under General Benedict Arnold which laid siege to Quebec in December, 1775. On that terrible night of the last day in the month when the attack of the Americans was repulsed and General Montgomery was killed, that same clergyman had seen that "stalking duellist" then familiarly known as "Little Burr" carry the body of his dead commander on his back from the field of battle amid a shower of bullets.

In closing his discourse, the reverend gentleman hoped that such legislation would be passed as would effectually put a stop to the practice of duelling. "Two of our first men in point of talents and information have exceeded in criminality and put common malefactors to the blush," said he, "and I trust this sad affair will put an end to the practice in the English-speaking countries at least."

But the good man's wish was not to be realized for many years to come. It seems strange to the reader of history in the present century to find such universal condemnation of Burr on account of the tragic ending of his duel with Hamilton, when the fact is recalled that in 1820 an affair equally tragic and deplorable took place, which has attracted but little popular attention.

Commodore Barron, who was in command of the American man-of-war "Chesapeake," was surprised by the "Leopard" and easily captured by the British vessel. He held Commodore Stephen Decatur personally accountable for evidence given by him before a

court-martial. Decatur's record was an illustrious one. But it is impossible to find in history or biography any such condemnation of Barron as has been meted out to Burr.

After Colonel Burr's departure from New York, his friend, Judge Van Ness, both by request and inclination, became his personal representative. He watched over affairs at Richmond Hill with as much solicitude as if he had been the actual owner. Another matter, in which he took particular pleasure in arranging a settlement, he had mentioned to Colonel Burr, but the latter refused to have anything to do with it beyond vaguely promising that he would bring a suit for libel against the editor of the American Citizen, if the attacks were continued.

One afternoon about dusk, Mr. James Cheetham, the editor of the American Citizen, sat in his office. He had learned of Colonel Burr's flight from the city and had made it the text of a particularly abusive and vituperative article. He had just finished it and read it through carefully, expressing from time to time his appreciation of his own handiwork. The door was opened and a man entered. Cheetham looked up; his visitor was Judge Van Ness. Van Ness did not sit down but, leaning his hand upon the back of a chair which stood beside Cheetham's desk, looked the editor squarely in the face, his dark eyes full of a fire indicating that his visit was not of a friendly character.

"Are you the editor of the American Citizen?" inquired Van Ness.

"My name is Cheetham," the man at the desk replied.

"I did not ask your name," said Van Ness, "that is immaterial. I inquired whether you were the editor of the American Citizen?"

"I am proud to hold that position," retorted Cheetham, somewhat defiantly. Van Ness did not seem dis-

posed to contest the editor's private opinion of his own merits, but continued:

"A short time ago, Mr. Editor of the American Citizen, you published in your paper a statement that Colonel Burr in his duel with the late General Hamilton wore a suit of silk underclothing, he having learned that such an article of wearing apparel would effectually stop an adversary's bullet. It is not necessary," said Van Ness, "for you either to deny or affirm that the article appeared in your paper. I know that it did, but the statement was a deliberate and intentional falsehood."

Cheetham half arose from his chair with an angry look in his face.

"Keep your seat, Mr. Editor of the American Citizen," continued Van Ness. "I am not done with you yet. When I have finished I will offer you any satisfaction that you, as a gentleman of honor, have a right to demand. In another issue of your paper," continued Van Ness, "you published a statement that for three weeks prior to the duel, Colonel Burr was daily engaged in pistol practice in the grounds at the rear of his residence, with a view to perfecting himself in marksmanship. That, like the other statement which I have mentioned, was a base and wilful lie, originating in your own brain, Mr. Editor of the American Citizen."

Again Cheetham started up as if he would resent the sarcasm of the speaker's remarks, but Van Ness did not appear to notice him and continued:

"In the same issue in which you referred to the suit of silk underclothing, you stated that a large party of the friends of Colonel Burr met on the evening of the duel at Richmond Hill, and that a hilarious affair took place in which toasts were drunk, and a speech made by the host in which he declared that he was sorry he had not shot General Hamilton through the heart. This

statement, like the other two that I have mentioned, was totally false and had its origin only in your base and malignant nature. Now, Mr. Editor of the American Citizen," cried Van Ness, "you may stand up!"

As though unable to resist the tone of command used by his visitor, Cheetham pushed back his chair and faced the man who had, during the past few minutes, called him a deliberate liar three times in succession.

"While Colonel Burr is absent in the South, and while he is completing his official duties at Washington, I am his personal representative in this city, and I wish to say to you, Mr. Editor of the American Citizen, that if another article reflecting upon the character or integrity of Colonel Burr appears in the estimable paper of which you are so proud to be the editor, I will seek you out and horsewhip you whenever and wherever I find you. If you resist, I will shoot you as I would a dog and all good citizens will applaud my action. You are not fit to meet a gentleman upon the field of honor, and you will never have that opportunity, however much you may strive for it."

With these words, Van Ness left the office, slamming the door behind him. Cheetham sank into his chair, clenched his hands, and ground his teeth in rage. Then he sat for a few moments going over in his mind the events which had just taken place. With a muttered curse, he took the article which he had read with such expressions of satisfaction so short a time before, and, tearing it into small pieces, threw it upon the floor.

In December, Colonel Burr reached Washington and resumed his seat as President of the Senate. A large part of the session was taken up with the trial of Judge Chase who had been impeached. As provided in such cases, the Vice-President sat as judge while the senators constituted the jury. As one of the senators remarked:

"During the trial, Burr presided with the justice and impartiality of a saint and the rigor of a devil."

Then came the closing hours of Congress. Vice-President Burr delivered a valedictory which was extemporaneous. No verbatim report has come down to posterity. One of the senators being asked how long Burr spoke, replied:

"I don't know; it may have been ten minutes, or an hour, or a day. When Burr speaks, I hear nothing but his voice, and see nothing but his eyes."

At the close of the speech, many of the senators were in tears and unable to attend to the few remaining matters of public business. As in later years, the clock was pushed back in order that the senators might have time to recover their composure and finish their official duties with a due regard for senatorial decorum.

That night, one of the senators asked Colonel Burr to dine with him at a friend's house in Virginia. The affair was an informal but pleasant one, and it was quite late when the two friends reached the little promontory in front of what afterwards became the Lee mansion at Arlington, and looked down upon the Potomac to see if the boat which was to carry them across had arrived. The sleeping city lay before them under the white light of the moon. As they both contemplated the scene, his friend remarked:

"At our feet lies the capital of our great country."

"I have no country!" replied Burr. "When to-morrow's sun rises, the only civic title to which I shall have a right will be that of an inhabitant of the world." Then he smiled, but with a quick resumption of his usual imperturbability and gravity of demeanor added, "But the world is wide, and there are many countries which need a deliverer to free them from tyranny and oppression."

CHAPTER XIII

A PRESIDENTIAL STRATAGEM

IN 1801, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr received the same number of electoral votes. The election was thus thrown into the House of Representatives. After thirty-six ballots, Jefferson was chosen President by a majority of one vote, and Burr became Vice-President. From that moment, Thomas Jefferson recognized Aaron Burr as his most formidable political rival.

When Jefferson, on the day of his inauguration as President, rode on horseback to the Capitol, tied his horse to a hitching-post, and went in to take the oath of office, he doubtless set an example of Republican simplicity, which in some respects was most commendable. But, by evincing in public so little appreciation of the dignity of the great office to which he had been elevated, he betrayed a contempt for official dignity, the contemplation of which is such a potent factor in creating the feeling that is known as patriotism, that was not so praiseworthy.

In the spring of 1805, it was recognized on all sides that Burr's reputed agreement or understanding with the Federalists to beat Jefferson, his defeat in the New York election for Governor, and his killing of Hamilton had effectually put an end to his further political advancement in the United States. Yet he was known by all parties to be a man of infinite resources and his every movement was watched with intense interest by them.

Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, sat in the White House at Washington. He was reading a communication signed by General James Wilkinson. While thus engaged, a visitor was announced. The President looked at the card and gave directions for his admittance. Mr. John Graham entered. He was an officer connected with the secret service of the government. For a long time he had been watching the movements of Burr and reporting thereon directly to the President.

"I cannot find," said Graham, "that our man has any plans perfected. No one, of course, can divine what is going on in that busy brain of his. We can only judge by his actions. At present, he sees many people and talks with many people, but they are his friends and it will be dangerous to make inquiries that would elicit positive information."

"I am sure," said the President, "that he has some deep-laid scheme in mind. It will not do to wait until he has completed his plans for then we shall have no opportunity to gather our forces to frustrate them."

"What is Your Excellency's plan?" inquired Graham.

"I have a little stratagem in my mind," replied the President, "that I have decided to confide to you, and to intrust the carrying out of it to your wisdom and discretion."

"Pardon me," said Graham, "but I do not exactly like this kind of service, Your Excellency. Mr. Burr, with all his faults, is a member of our party."

"You mean he was," said the President, "we have no further use for him."

"If Your Excellency will pardon my speaking plainly," said Graham, "it seems rather hard that the man who had the tact to unite the Democratic party in the State of New York, to bring the Clintons and Livingstons to act in concert with him and thus carry the

State for our party, deserves something better at our hands than to be spied upon and led into further trouble."

"If you continue your remarks in the same vein," answered the President, drily, "I shall be forced to consider you in the same category with Colonel Burr; in other words, come to the conclusion that your usefulness to our party is over. I do not care to confide the details of my little stratagem to any half-hearted adherent. I design it as a final test of Colonel Burr's loyalty and fidelity. If he passes through it safely, I give you my word, Graham, that I will appoint him to some mission abroad or to some high position under the government. If he fails, and falls a victim to our little plot, you will agree with me that he is a man so unstable in his character and so little to be depended upon in any emergency, that our party will be well rid of him."

"Under those conditions, Your Excellency, I do not see that I can interpose any further objections."

Then the President proceeded to unfold to Graham the details of his plan, which was to have some friend of Colonel Burr induce him to go West to Kentucky or Tennessee, when it became a State, with the idea of being elected a representative to Congress.

"My object," said the President, "is to keep him away from Washington for the present, and to have him meet new people. You know as well as I do the peculiar relations that General James Wilkinson used to hold to our government."

"Yes," remarked Graham, "and to another government."

"That should not be mentioned," remarked the President, "even in my presence. When Burr reaches the West, I wish him to see Wilkinson. Wilkinson will have his directions from me personally, for I shall order his immediate attendance here in Washington.

I shall depend in this matter upon you and General Wilkinson, and if my estimate of Colonel Burr is correct, you will find that he, as Shakespeare says, is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. Then our compact is made. If Colonel Burr passes through this ordeal successfully, he is to be taken back into our party and rewarded. If he falls, to quote Shakespeare once more, he will fall like Lucifer, never to hope again.

"You may call upon me again in a few days," continued the President, "and I will give you more specific instructions. In the meantime, I would suggest that you keep a close watch on the comings and goings of that great friend of our party, Colonel Burr."

Graham noticed the intended sarcasm but he said nothing and with a low bow, took his departure.

If Burr's political future was so surely blasted, why was the President still so keen in his pursuit? What had he to fear from a rival suffering from such a load of political and social odium? Why should he still follow up with enmity a man who was virtually ostracised by the so-called good men of all parties? He had been elected for a second term and there was every indication that his successor, in 1809, would be some other member of the Virginian junta—either Mr. Madison or Mr. Monroe.

How could a man who had borne so grand a part in the struggle for American freedom, and who had filled with so much honor and credit the high positions to which the confidence and suffrages of his countrymen had elevated him; how could a man of such good birth, culture, and refinement, and the presumable possessor of high moral principles, sink so low as to devise so pitiful and despicable a stratagem to ruin a political rival; and, above all, use a paid agent of the government as the instrument of his personal spite? By it, he inaugurated that relentless strife, based upon his envy and fear of Aaron Burr as his great political

rival, which culminated in the historic trial at Richmond three years later, where Jefferson used in vain the great power of the National government to crush an indomitable foe.

About a week after his interview with the President, Mr. Graham received a communication informing him that his salary had been materially increased. He smiled as he read the communication apprising him of the fact.

"If, when the President asked me to undertake the task of ferreting out Burr's schemes, I had signified a great willingness to do so, I do not think I should have received this increase. It makes little difference to me whether I follow up Burr or some other man, but it does make a great deal of difference to me whether I am well paid for it or not."

He finished his soliloquy by saying, "I have found out, as the result of many years' experience, that it is much better to have your employer raise your salary voluntarily, than it is to make a specific demand for an advance."

CHAPTER XIV

THE FLY AND THE WEB

THE spider spins its web slowly and laboriously, and often, when just completed, it is swept away and destroyed by the dust-cloth or broom of the tidy housewife; but the little worker, nothing daunted, begins its task once more as though nothing had happened. So it is with the plots of conspirators which are often wrecked by the intentional or accidental doings of their proposed victims.

Burr listened attentively to the proposition, made to him by an assumed friend, that he should go to Kentucky and endeavor to secure an election to Congress from that State; but he did not indicate a positive acquiescence in the plan, nor commit himself in any way to the project.

Graham followed Burr as a huntsman would a stag, never losing sight of his intended prey; but he learned little of importance to communicate to his presidential confederate.

The chief executive, however, had not been idle. In compliance with his orders, General Wilkinson had reported at Washington, and the part that he was to play in the presidential stratagem was carefully explained to him. Wilkinson was not at all averse to becoming a party to the plot, for he felt that this new confidence reposed in him was, in fact, a condonation of his past offences.

Wilkinson, like most men who serve two masters, had been successful; not so much by his own ability

as by the force of circumstances that could not be resisted. Spain, in a moment of weakness, had ceded Louisiana to France, or rather to Napoleon, for, at that time he was France, coupled with the understanding, however, that it was to be forever retained by France and never to be ceded or sold to any other country; but in 1803, Napoleon had urgent need of funds, for a war with England was imminent, and though, when an offer was made by the United States to purchase Louisiana, he, at first, refused point blank, the transfer was finally made, the price fixed being fifteen millions of dollars for land and people. Strange, then, that in the last century, so many people objected to the purchase of the Philippines because the inhabitants were included in the bargain, but the acquisition of Louisiana was surely a notable precedent. As a reward for his double-dealing, President Jefferson had appointed General Wilkinson Governor of the Territory of Louisiana. The President knew his man. He told Wilkinson to inflame Burr's ambition with stories of the wealth and power to be gained in Texas and Mexico. By using Wilkinson as a tool, he had virtually captured Louisiana without firing a gun. He now proposed to use both Wilkinson and Burr so as to win by strategy Texas, Mexico, and the Great West which stretched from the Mississippi to the Pacific. He was undoubtedly sincere in professing his belief in popular rights. His dream of empire was a country which was to become a haven of refuge for the weak and oppressed from all lands. But in the President's plan, while Burr was to be led on to his ruin, the President counted on Wilkinson's capacity for double-dealing saving him at the proper time.

Burr and Wilkinson met at a private dinner party, and the origin of what afterwards became known as the Great Conspiracy was at this festive board. Graham kept in the background. His role was that of

executioner, and the time had not yet come for him to build the scaffold and adjust the rope.

Wilkinson was in his element. He felt now that he was on a better footing with the President. A man of talent and genius was to be led to his ruin, but what did that matter to Wilkinson, if he rose higher when his victim fell?

Wilkinson's speech was fervid in praise of the possibilities of the future.

"You can't understand it, Burr," he said one day, when their intimate social relations had lasted about a fortnight, "unless you come to New Orleans and examine the situation from a close point of view. I am going back in a few days and you must go with me. We will stop at Frankfort and Nashville and I will introduce you to some friends upon whom we both can count."

But Burr declined this proposition. "It is too early for us to be seen so much together," he remarked.

Wilkinson had shown him the equipage in which he proposed to return to New Orleans. It consisted of a gorgeous carriage, drawn by four beautiful horses, with drivers, outriders, and escort in full military uniform. It looked more like the triumphal progress of an Imperial Viceroy than the quiet return to his duties of an American territorial governor.

So it happened that "General" and "Governor" Wilkinson proceeded on his way in state, while Burr journeyed on horseback to Pittsburgh, where he purchased a flatboat, which was in reality a raft with a small cabin built thereon, to take him down the Ohio River. The boat was carried along by the current of the stream, and required as crew but two men, who, provided with long poles, prevented its running aground or coming into collision with other rafts or boats.

Just as Burr was preparing to start upon this momentous voyage, what appeared to be a prematurely

old man approached him and inquired whether he could secure a passage to Marietta.

The great want of our countrymen a hundred years ago was the means of speedy and comfortable transportation. Long voyages could only be made on horseback, in vehicles, or by boat, and they were slow and tedious. Among gentlemen, it was the usual custom to help a stranger on his way without the hope of reward. In fact, to be tendered money for such a service would have been considered an affront.

"Come right aboard, sir," said Burr, "we are just going to cast off. I am alone and should be glad of your company." The stranger thanked him politely, and stepped upon the raft. His only baggage consisted of a small portmanteau.

The first day and night passed pleasantly. The stranger was taciturn, but he was a good listener and his host was ever a most delightful talker.

The next morning, seeing a large flock of birds hovering over the river, Burr went to the little cabin and got his pistol case. He loaded and primed the weapons and brought down several brightly-plumaged victims by his good marksmanship, the birds being secured by means of the long poles.

The old gentleman watched the sport attentively. Finally Burr turned towards him and, handing him a pistol, said, "wouldn't you like to try your hand?" The stranger accepted the weapon and walked slowly towards the other end of the raft until he was screened from view by the intervening cabin. Burr continued shooting, and the two polemen were kept busily engaged in securing the trophies as the raft swept by them.

Suddenly a loud report rang out upon the air, followed by a sound like that of a heavy body falling. Burr dropped the pistol which he had just finished loading and ran to the other end of the raft. There

a horrible sight met his astonished gaze. Prone upon his face lay the stranger, with the still smoking pistol in his hand. Burr lifted him up, and, as he did so, a stream of blood came from his mouth. A slight examination showed that he was shot through the lungs. With the help of one of the polemen the wounded man was laid upon one of the beds in the little cabin. The flow of blood was stanched and a strong stimulant administered. The man soon opened his eyes and looked up at Burr who sat beside him holding his hand.

"A sad accident," said Burr. "How did it happen?"

The man shook his head and said feebly, "It was done intentionally; I aimed at my heart, but my hand was unsteady."

"But why?" asked Burr, in his direct manner.

"I will tell you," said the man, "if my strength will allow me."

Burr gave him a drink of brandy which put new life into his veins.

"Do you know me?" asked the man. Burr shook his head.

"I know you," the stranger continued; "you are Colonel Aaron Burr; you killed General Hamilton. Would that I had died as he did."

Burr, inwardly, was somewhat astonished, but betrayed no feeling. The stranger continued:

"My name is Janes, Timothy Janes. I used to be the Honorable Timothy Janes, for I was a member of Congress, from Pennsylvania, during your last two years in the Senate."

"You have a right to the title now, having once used it," remarked Burr quietly.

"No!" said the man sadly, "there is nothing honorable about me now. I will tell you why. One day in debate I said something which I thought to be true and

which I have since learned was true. It reflected upon the honor of a southern member who, without asking for an explanation or an apology, sent me a peremptory challenge to fight a duel. I was a member of the Orthodox church and told the gentleman who called upon me that it was against my principles to shed blood in such a way, and that I could not fight him. He did not return and I supposed the whole affair had blown over. Not so! After Congress closed, I went home and found, to my surprise, that my would-be adversary had had an account of the affair printed in a paper published in his district, in which I was called a liar, a blackguard, a poltroon, and a coward, for I had refused an honorable reparation for what was called both an insult and an injury."

Here the speaker's strength gave way and he lay motionless for some minutes. Burr gave him more brandy and he was soon able to continue his story.

"Marked copies of the paper were sent to all the editors and influential men in my district. A political opponent, who wished my seat in Congress, fanned the flame, and, although I had spoken the truth, I found myself a discredited and dishonored man among my own people. I went South to see my adversary to arrange a settlement of our difficulties. He refused to let me enter the house; he sent word that if I had a written apology, I could send it to him by one of his slaves. This I would not do, and I returned home. In a short time, other marked copies of a paper, containing what purported to be an account of my visit, were sent to those who were once my friends and supporters. In this account, it was stated that instead of apologizing I had repeated the calumny and was kicked out of the house by a slave."

The stranger stopped. He pressed his hand to his heart and Burr thought the end had come. But he spoke again.

"My brethren in the church told me that I had done right, but," he cried—and as he uttered the word he raised himself in bed and lifted up his right hand—"if I were to live it over again, I would fight him a dozen times rather than endure the life I have led."

His strength was gone. He fell back heavily upon the bed and another stream of blood welled from his lips. He was dead.

The flatboat stopped when the next town on the river was reached. In the little cemetery, a modest headstone announces the fact that the Honorable Timothy Janes, M. C., lies buried there.

The flatboat passed Blennerhassett Island during the night when Burr was asleep, so he did not see the place that his name was to make famous for all time. In due season, the Falls of the Ohio were reached where, nearby, now stands the great city of Louisville. Here Burr sold his raft and continued on horseback to Frankfort. He was received, as the saying is, with open arms. Social civilities were showered upon him on every hand. Next, he continued his journey southward to Nashville. There the same social adulation awaited him. He visited General Jackson at The Hermitage. The General was the avowed enemy of the Spaniard and was inwardly chafing because the President did not find some pretext which would oblige Congress to declare war and allow him to lead his Tennessee riflemen against the hated foe.

"I have a good mind," said he, one day, to Burr, "to take a thousand of my trusty men and whip Spain on my own hook."

"But the United States authorities would call that treason," remarked Burr.

"Would they?" cried the old war-horse. "Then I would answer them as Patrick Henry did: 'If that be treason, make the most of it.' Treason? Nonsense!" the old general exclaimed. "Why! Before

the Mississippi was opened to our trade, George Washington himself said, that with three hundred of my West Augusta riflemen I could carve my way to the Gulf. Was it treason when Washington said that?" Jackson asked, ironically.

Burr did not reply. But the question sent hosts of new ideas surging through his fertile, active brain, and chimeras of future fame and fortune were mirrored before his heated imagination.

New Orleans! The city of *La Belle Creole.* With what delight Burr looked upon this European city, at the end of his long voyage through almost trackless wildernesses! It was like the mirage which the lost traveler sees when hope has almost vanished; and when that disappears, the last hope goes too.

Wilkinson was ubiquitous. He was at Burr's right hand from morn till night. He introduced him to the wealth, culture, and beauty of this western imitation of beautiful Paris. At private dinner, public banquet, social levee, and official ball, the late Vice-President shone conspicuously by his personal beauty, courtly grace, and sparkling wit. He charmed all with whom he came in contact.

Then Wilkinson drew him from these scenes of festivity. Burr, mounted upon a superb charger, reviewed the United States army and was greeted with acclamation.

Then Wilkinson took him to the dividing line between American and Spanish territory and pointed to the Promised Land.

"When you come down," said Wilkinson, "with your twenty thousand trusty riflemen behind you, I shall, of course, be obliged to make a show of resistance. But what can I do? The popular heart will be fired by your audacity. The President will find some pretext, Congress will declare war, and then we will move forward together as brothers in arms until we plant

our victorious flag above the Halls of the Montezumas."

Thus duped and deceived, Burr fell an easy victim, and, like the fly in the old story, walked boldly into the web that had been prepared for him. It must be acknowledged, however, that he was led to take this step as much by his personal ambition as by the assistance which he counted upon receiving, when needed, from the army of the United States.

Burr again turned his eyes eastward. He was tired of parlor and banquet-hall and ball-room. He longed for the saddle and the field of glory. Money and men he must have. Money first; from friends, from relatives, and interested supporters. Men of gigantic frame and iron nerve from the clearings made in the mighty wildernesses of the West. He would yet sit upon a throne, a crown upon his head. By his side, his daughter Theodosia, the first lady in the land. At his feet, his little grandson, the heir presumptive to the throne which he had raised. Wilkinson should be the general of his army and Truxton the admiral of his fleet. His domains should reach from Canada to the Isthmus, and from the Mississippi to the Pacific. Napoleon might bring Continental Europe to his feet, but Aaron Burr would rule a mightier kingdom.

CHAPTER XV

A PALACE IN THE WOODS

WHEN Kate recovered consciousness, she found herself lying face downward on the greensward. Lifting her head, she looked about her. She saw something bright gleaming among the green shoots of the turf. Yes, they were the pieces of silver and the pieces of gold that she had dropped when she fainted and fell to the ground. Then there came a mighty rush of memory, and she saw once more the revengeful face of Frederic and heard once more his cruel words.

It was very warm. The sun rode high in the heavens, and its burning rays penetrated every nook and corner of the little clearing. The birds had hushed their songs and were resting quietly in the shade afforded by the leaves and trunks of the trees. On every side could be heard the lazy droning of the insects, that musical accompaniment that Nature supplies as part of a hot summer day.

Kate rose to her feet with difficulty. She felt weak and there was a blinding pain through her eyes and head. She walked slowly to the little grassy mound beside the tree and rested for a while. Then she returned to where the money had fallen, and, dropping upon her knees, picked it up slowly and laboriously, piece by piece; then she attempted to count it, to make sure that she had lost none, but could not. Returning to the farm-house, she went up to her room and threw herself upon her bed. She felt hot and feverish. One

of the other servants, Mary Williams by name, had seen her come in and had noticed her slow step and tired look. In a short time, Mary went to her room and found Kate in a burning fever, tossing to and fro. Captain Clarke was informed of the fact and a doctor was summoned. It was three weeks before Kate was able to leave her bed and sit for an hour or two in the old-fashioned rocker that stood beside it. Mary spent every moment that she could spare from her duties with her. Captain Clarke had not visited her, but Mary said he had asked for her every day and he had sent her some fruit and flowers.

From Mary, Kate learned that Frederic had a long talk with his father on the evening of the duel, and the next day he had left home. Mary did not know just where he had gone but she supposed it was out West.

A month more passed by before Kate had sufficiently recovered to leave Captain Clarke's house. Upon this course she was resolved. Her relations with her employer's son had been known to the other servants and she could not bring herself to remain there when they all knew that he had left home without even saying "Good-bye" to her. Her interview with her employer, just before her departure, lasted about ten minutes. He insisted upon paying her wages in full; she refused to receive them and insisted upon paying the doctor's bill and, at least, a portion of Mary's wages. The captain was equally firm in his refusal to accept a cent for either purpose; so Kate thanked him for his kindness and, not wishing to continue the painful scene any longer, accepted the money which he claimed was due her but which, before leaving, she gave to Mary.

Where should she go? What could she do? Then there came flashing into her mind the memory of that day when the courteous stranger, who had said he was a friend of Colonel Burr, but who her lover had de-

clared was Colonel Burr himself, had given her the money for a wedding dowry, and had also told her that in case she needed a friend to call upon Colonel Burr at Richmond Hill, in New York City. Thither she went, to find him absent as may be anticipated. The servant told her the master of the house was not at home. She was advised by John, Colonel Burr's valet, to see Judge Van Ness; in him, she recognized the companion of Colonel Burr on the day of the duel. He knew her and was as courteous and chivalrous in his treatment of her as if he had been Colonel Burr himself. He insisted that she should remain at his house until he wrote to Colonel Burr and received an answer, and she was forced to comply or else go out into the world and seek a situation. She mentioned this latter alternative but Mr. Van Ness would not listen to it. "Colonel Burr would never forgive me," he said, "if I allowed you to take such a course."

With all possible speed, Burr traversed the long stretch of country between New Orleans and Philadelphia. During the journey, his busy brain had been active. Hundreds of plots, plans, and schemes had rushed through his mind, to be cast one side as useless, or adopted wholly, or in part, as of value. He could not declare his actual aims and ulterior purposes in plain language to everybody. No, he must talk differently to different people, as suited their comprehension and availability. To some, he hinted the possibility of his becoming a resident of Kentucky or Tennessee and endeavoring to become elected a member of Congress from one of those States. He never meant to accept any such position, but the telling of this story was an entering wedge to the confidence of those to whom it was told.

To others, he spoke of a great land scheme that he had in mind. Some four hundred thousand acres of land on the Washita River, owned by Baron Bastrop,

were to be purchased by Burr. The land would cost forty thousand dollars and he was endeavoring to raise this sum. His scheme was to colonize it with settlers from the then western states, and, as he told the story, visions of fabulous profits loomed before the eyes of his attentive listeners.

Bearing in mind what Wilkinson had told him about the secret knowledge that he possessed of the President's wishes and intentions, but which, of course, if attributed to the President would necessarily have to be promptly denied by him, Burr endeavored both by speech and action to convince other listeners that his plans were known only to himself and his intimate friends, and that he was acting in direct opposition to the President for whom, and his followers, he even expressed contempt. To those most closely connected with him by ties of relationship or long-continued friendship, he divulged his ulterior purpose, which was the capture of Texas and Mexico and the formation of an independent kingdom, with himself at the head.

Burr was now ready to make another journey westward, but this time he did not intend to go alone. He felt it would divert suspicion if upon this trip he formed one of a little family party, evidently bent upon viewing the beauties of the great West. So he wrote to his son-in-law explaining his proposed schemes at length, and asked him to meet him in Washington, bringing his wife and little boy with him. When they reached the capital, he answered Van Ness's letter and requested him to arrange to have Miss Embleton join their party. This was done, and from the moment that Theodosia Burr and Kate Embleton met, they became firm and devoted friends.

Theodosia was the result of what might be termed a hot-house system of education. She was far more advanced in the languages, literature, the sciences, and

art than the women of her time. Kate was a New Jersey country girl whose book learning had been meagre; but, as has been said, she was a great reader and had a most retentive memory. She was a capital foil for Theodosia, and, although their natures and accomplishments were so dissimilar, the two women never showed to better advantage than when in each other's company. Kate's eager questions and sharp rejoinders stimulated Theodosia to unusual brightness and vivacity in speech and action, and Colonel Burr, who was intensely proud of his daughter, became proud also of her bright and attractive companion, who was now his protégé.

The little party now set off on its overland journey to Pittsburgh where a boat was to be taken. Mr. Alston was unable to accompany them owing to some official business that required a longer stay in Washington, but he promised to join them at the Falls of the Ohio where they were to await his arrival. The trip to Pittsburgh was made by carriage, although, over some parts of the route, Colonel Burr and Miss Embleton rode on horseback. At Pittsburgh, a large boat was purchased. The cabin contained two comparatively large-sized rooms, one being devoted to Theodosia, her child, and Kate, and the other to Colonel Burr.

The crew, as on the former occasion, consisted of two polemen; but Burr decided that the work would be too arduous for so small a crew and, before sailing, two more were engaged, one being a stout young negro boy about eighteen years of age, and the other an old, weather-beaten, grizzly-bearded, river boatman who gave the name of James Gray. Two of the men took charge of the boat by day and two by night. The huge raft, for it was really nothing more, moved slowly along keeping pace with the current of the stream.

One morning the whole party stood upon the for-

ward part of the raft enjoying the beautiful scenery and the glories of the rising sun. Little Aaron Burr Alston was more inquisitive than usual that morning.

"Where does the river go to, Gamp?" he asked, turning to his grandfather.

"It goes on, on, on," replied Colonel Burr, "until it falls into the sea."

"Where does the sea go to?" persisted little Aaron.

"Into the ocean," answered Burr, with a laugh.

"And where does the ocean go?" asked the little fellow, evidently not satisfied with the answers.

"The ocean rolls on, and on, everywhere," said Burr, "encircling the world."

"What's the world?" queried the little boy, clinging to his grandfather's hand.

"I am afraid you will not understand me, Gampillo," was the answer, "when I tell you that the world is the great theatre of human action in which I hope, some day, you will become a greater and a better man than Gamp has ever been. I think, Theodosia," he said, turning to his daughter, "that it would be well to have Gampillo begin the study of geography. How old were you when I first showed you a map of the world?"

"A little more than four years of age," replied Theodosia, "and, strange as it may seem, what I learned then I have never forgotten."

Burr excused himself to the ladies, saying that he had some writing to do, and retired to his room in the cabin. Some particularly bright scenery attracted the attention of the ladies to the left bank of the river, and for a moment they became unmindful of the actions of little Aaron. James Gray and the negro boy were on the side of the raft where the ladies stood. The current set in towards the shore and it required constant poling to keep the unwieldy craft from running aground.

Suddenly, prompted by an impulse which she could not explain, the mother turned her head and looked towards the right-hand side of the raft. Little Aaron was not in sight. Her first thought was that he had joined his grandfather in the cabin; but a mother's heart is never satisfied with uncertainty; she must know positively. She ran and looked into the cabin. The boy was not there.

At that moment, there came a loud cry from Kate. Theodosia rushed to the forward end of the raft and Burr dropped his pen and followed her. Kate stood with white face and shaking hand pointing to some floating object in the river, some thirty or forty feet ahead of the raft. All her education, strength of mind, and fortitude could not prevent the young mother from giving a wild shriek of alarm and despair. There could be no doubt of the truth. The white dress floating upon the surface of the water must be that of her darling boy. Burr took in the situation in an instant. He divested himself of his coat, took off his shoes, and threw his hat upon the deck. Turning to the boatmen he cried,

"To the centre of the stream! Pole with all your might! Call the other two men!"

They were asleep under an awning at the other end of the raft. Then Burr made a leap into the water and struck out vigorously towards the floating body. Of course the current helped him, but it took along the light form of the child faster than it did his more weighty one, and it required the lusty strokes of the practised swimmer to make any gain.

It seemed an age to Theodosia and Kate before he reached the child, but it was in reality not more than a couple of minutes; but even then he was none too soon. The little boy had fallen into the water in such a way that his dress had buoyed him up and instead of sinking he had floated, but his garments were now

nearly saturated with water and in a very short time he would have gone down. Burr held the child aloft, so that all might know of his safety, and calmly awaited the on-coming of the raft.

The delighted mother grasped the little boy in her arms and Burr climbed upon the raft none the worse for the adventure. The two ladies took the child, so providentially rescued, to the cabin. Burr walked across the raft and fixed his scintillating black eyes upon the face of James Gray.

"Why didn't you try to save the child?" he asked, in sharp tones.

"I can't swim," answered the man, doggedly.

Burr gave him a look of utter contempt, turned upon his heel, and entered his cabin.

During the afternoon of that day, they passed the mouth of the Little Kanawha and came in sight of a wooded island. The company had gathered at the front of the raft to enjoy the unusual spectacle. Burr knew who lived upon the island, and he also knew that he intended to stop there and make the acquaintance of the owner. While in Philadelphia, he had heard of Harman Blennerhassett, and his inquiries had elicited such information that he had determined to become acquainted with him. He had no letters of introduction. He had not informed his companions that he intended to stop at the island. He wished the visit to appear to be entirely informal and not prearranged.

Who was Blennerhassett? He was an Irish gentleman, of good family, one branch of it being represented by a member of the nobility. Harman Blennerhassett had been educated for the law, for it was the only profession which was open to him; his aspirations did not lean to the army, the navy, or to the church, and for this reason the law was his only refuge. He had visited Paris during the Reign of Terror, and had been

present at the storming of the Bastile. The stormy scenes in France had led to the growth of the seeds of discontent in Ireland, and, on his return home, he recognized that he must either cast his fortunes with the advance forces who demanded freedom for Ireland, or he must turn his back on the traditions of his family and ally himself with those whom the rest of his people would consider their oppressors.

There was one other course open to him. He could leave the country, or in plain words, could take refuge in flight. Glowing accounts came across the water of the wonderful land that had been wrested from England and whose prosperous colonies were now independent members of that rising nation, the United States of America. He decided to go to that great country. He sold out his estates which brought him more than thirty thousand pounds; then he visited England. While there, he became acquainted with and married Margaret Agnew, and with her emigrated to America. After studying the resources and probable future of the different sections of the country, he fixed upon the West as his future home. Charmed with an island which he found in the Ohio River, so near to the shores of both Ohio and Virginia that a voice could be heard across the intervening stream, he had purchased half of it, and there he had erected the most beautiful mansion to be found west of the Allegheny mountains. Materials and men had been brought from the East; to the original cost was added a great expense for transportation and the board of the workmen engaged in the construction of this palace in the woods. But, with money, wonders can be accomplished; and it was so in this case. When finished, nearly half of his fortune had been spent in building and decoration. The island now showed the beauty of both nature and art. Half was in its virgin state; the other half had been still further beautified by man

until it was hard to say whether the hand of God or that of man had evoked the greatest beauty, ever bearing in mind that unless the hand of God had first performed its work the hand of man would have been powerless.

And what had this man, who had been rich and who lacked the bravery to stay at home and cast his lot with his struggling countrymen, done in this western wilderness? Like a knight, he had been armed *cap-a-pie* to take an honorable part in the battles of his native land, but, at the signs of on-coming strife, his heart within him had weakened, and he had fled to the woods and hidden himself in this fairy-like palace. He had convinced himself that he was not born to shine in councils of war but was to achieve a name for himself in the more peaceful realms of science. He was a student of literature but he had never written a book, nor had the production of one by him ever reached the domain of probability. He was an astronomer, but he had discovered no star to bear his name, nor had he contributed any valuable data to the sum of astronomical knowledge. He was a scientist, but no new discovery or invention of value to his fellow-men had been evolved from his brain. He had a large library and a well-appointed laboratory. He had thought much, and had done nothing. He was an heir apparent to future greatness, but it was extremely doubtful if that greatness would ever be secured by his own volition. He needed a spur, an incentive from without, and it had been decreed by Fate that that incentive should be supplied by the small man with piercing black eyes, who stood at the forward end of the lumbering raft as it approached the enchanted island above the trees and shrubbery of which could be seen the attractive outlines of the palace in the woods.

"To which side of the island shall we steer?" asked one of the polemen, approaching Burr.

"We will anchor," Burr replied, "on the river bank opposite to the front of the house, but some distance below it."

Burr did not wish it to appear as though he was seeking an invitation to land upon the island.

It was about dusk when the huge craft was securely moored at the place designated, and while supper was being prepared the little party went ashore.

It seemed so restful to stand once more upon solid ground, and sit down upon the grass beneath the trees. Little Aaron was delighted; and the setting sun cast its rays upon no happier party than was gathered on the river bank that evening.

After supper the party took a quiet stroll, and, from a secluded position on an embankment, had an unobstructed view of the mansion which was an object of wonder and admiration on all sides. There was no moon but the starlit sky shed a quiet radiance of its own upon the picture.

Burr had not been contemplating its natural and architectural beauties as had his companions. Its strategic value was uppermost in his mind. What a fine base of operations it would make! Here could be concealed the munitions of war and provisions for the men; within its shady recesses his recruits could be drilled in the art of war, without attracting the attention that such proceedings would upon the main land. Then it was so advantageously situated as a point of embarkation when his flotilla should be constructed. Besides, Blennerhassett was reputed to be a rich man, and although Burr had some money, and the promise of more, there had never been an army too well provided with those sinews of war—silver and gold.

The companions of his voyage retired early. Burr sat for some time smoking his pipe and going over and over again in his mind the needed military prepara-

tions that formed so important a part of his scheme. Yes! he must enlist this Prince of the Woods on his side.

Suddenly he arose, and calling to the two polemen who were on duty for the night, he assisted them in launching the small boat which was carried on the after part of the raft. This was easily accomplished and, taking a pair of oars, Burr rowed off silently and was soon lost to sight in the shadows of inky blackness cast upon the river by the tall trees. He was not unobserved. The old boatman, James Gray, who was off duty, raised himself upon his elbow and looked after him.

"What is he up to now?" he asked himself, but, as he had no means of following Burr, he fell back upon his blanket and was soon fast asleep.

Burr rowed around the end of the island and finally came to the back of the house. The barns and other out-buildings could not be seen from the side of the river where the raft was moored. Burr was more and more impressed with the fitness of the place as a base of operations for the great scheme that he had in mind. His boat drifted idly towards the shore. What was that—some one singing? It was the voice of a negro and it possessed that wild, weird tone that seems to voice both their present subjection and their future hope. Burr listened intently. Above the soft lapping of the waves, the words could be heard distinctly. It was an old woman, singing her little pickaninny to sleep.

"I see a gray coon in de corn,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
I heah de massa blow his horn,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
I see a niggah at de gray coon shoot,
I heah de echo of de old horn's toot,
An' I heah an owl in de wild-wood hoot,
Sleep, baby, sleep.

Alligator gruntin' in de old bayou,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
At a fat pig a fishin' in de flue,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
His teeth dey am big, an' wide, an' white,
An' he am a chucklin' at de great big bite
He am gwine to have off dat pig to-night.
Sleep, baby, sleep.

I heah de old wild geese a flyin' by,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
De air am a ringin' wid dere loud cry,
Sleep, baby, sleep;
It's gwine to be cole, but you am snug
As de little hoppin' lizard an' de big June bug,
So I'll leab you now, wid a good-night hug,
Sleep, baby, sleep."

The next morning dawned bright and beautiful. Rain had fallen during the night and the drops, still clinging to the leaves of the trees, shone like diamonds in the morning sunlight. The boat, in which Burr had made his trip by starlight, was still in the water, moored to the side of the raft. At Burr's command, the young negro boy and one of the polemen, named Ackers, entered the boat and took up the oars. James Gray would have been glad to have accompanied the party, but Burr had not looked at him since he had given him that contemptuous glance.

Then Theodosia, Kate, and little Aaron were helped into the boat. As Burr took his seat in the bow, Theodosia asked,

"Where are we going, father?"

Burr replied, "We are going to make a call upon the Prince and Princess who live in yonder castle." As he said this, he pointed towards the mansion which was lighted up by the morning sun and which seemed, in reality, to be a palace of marble.

"Who lives there?" inquired Kate.

"His name is Blennerhassett," Burr answered, "and the fair domain over which he reigns is called Blennerhassett Island."

"To my mind," said Theodosia, as the boat neared the little landing-place, "it will always be the Island Beautiful."

CHAPTER XVI

THE ISLAND BEAUTIFUL

THE great hall of the Palace in the Woods! The room was of large dimensions, no doubt built in imitation of those old baronial halls in "Merrie England" which the owner of this palace had often visited. The coloring of the walls was dark and sombre rather than bright and cheerful; but its subdued tints were relieved by a beautiful cornice of white plaster bordered by a gilt molding running around the lofty ceiling. Its furniture was rich and heavy, conforming to the European fashion of the day.

An old negro servant with wrinkled face and whitened hair entered the great room. He was followed closely by a young man in what might be called an undress military uniform, for although the shape of his garments indicated that he belonged to the militia, and the insignia of his rank betrayed the fact that he was a captain, he bore no weapons. His visit was presumably social rather than warlike in its nature.

As the old servant politely ushered the guest into the great reception-room, he said, in a half-explanatory and half-apologetic way.

"Take a seat, Massa. I'll speak to Missus. Massa is takin' off his shootin' jacket. He's been out shootin' birds."

The young man said, interrogatively:

"So he is going to have a game dinner, Ransome?"

Ransome laughed and said with an unctuous chuckle:

"Reckon not, Massa Clarke."

"Why not?" asked the young man.

Ransome laughed heartily and chuckled again:

"'Cause he didn't hit 'em. He's terrible nearsighted, Massa is. He puts the gun over my shoulder and then I say level, now level, Massa Blennerhassett—there, a little to the right—so—and then a little to the left—so—and then I say steady, fire! Off goes the gun, and off goes the birds too, and so I reckon our company won't have any birds fo' dinner to-day."

"Company?" said the young man, inquiringly.

"Yes, a gen'leman and two of the most beautifullest ladies and most cunningest little boy you ever saw. The wife is mighty pooty, but the daughter is jess as lively as a squirrel."

The fact came to the young man's mind that he was getting too inquisitive, but crushing down the silent mentor he asked:

"What's the lady's name?"

"They call her Kate," said Ransome.

The young man turned away so that his face could not be seen by the old servant, for a pained expression had come over it. That name had started up memories which, try as he might, he could not forget. Kate! Kate! That name was ever to be the magic talisman that would unlock the secret chambers of his heart. Quickly recovering his composure, Frederic Clarke turned to Ransome and said a little sharply:

"Go, Ransome, I'm in haste to see your master. If he is not ready to see me I must see your mistress."

"Yes, Massa," replied Ransome. As soon as he got outside of the door, he gave another of his oily little chuckles and soliloquized: "Reckon he don't know any pooty gal named Kate."

The young man walked nervously up and down the long room. "Kate," said he, "how that name brings back memories of my Jersey home and that fatal morning. She was determined to keep that money. I gave

her the choice and she remained true to that villain. I left home the next day—came to Ohio—am county sheriff and captain in the militia."

At this moment, the great door was opened and Mrs. Blennerhassett entered. Frederic advanced towards her with outstretched hands and said:

"My dear Mrs. Blennerhassett, I am delighted to see you, though my business is with your husband."

"My dear Captain," she replied, "I hope it isn't a very important engagement; if it is, you had better let me arrange it. My husband is a man learned in books, but, I must confess, utterly devoid of practicality."

The young captain said, gallantly: "Mr. Blennerhassett is fortunate in having so devoted and competent a partner to protect him from extortion."

The lady laughed merrily and said: "I can't always do that. Why only yesterday, he employed an individual to gather some mussel shells for him—he is studying conchology—and the party charged him an exorbitant price. My husband asked the reason for the high charge. What do you think the fellow said?"

The young man shook his head, then asked, interrogatively:

"That they were scarce?"

"Not only that," she replied, "but gave, as a further reason, that the diving was so deep."

"Diving? For mussel shells?" cried Frederic, as he burst into a hearty laugh.

"Yes, and when my husband inquired how deep, the man had the audacity to say, in fifteen feet of water." Then they both laughed heartily. "That convinced my husband, and he paid five times their value without further questioning."

The great door was again opened and Blennerhassett appeared. As he advanced, his wife ran towards him,

a look of eager interest in her face. She cried impulsively:

"I am so glad you are back safe, Harman. I'm always afraid you will meet with some accident when you go shooting. Were you fortunate this morning?"

"Very fortunate—for the birds," he replied, "they got away."

"Pardon me, Captain," cried Mrs. Blennerhassett, turning towards Frederic. Then she faced her husband and said:

"Here is Captain Clarke, Harman. He comes to see you on business.

"Glad to see you, Captain," said the latter in a hospitable manner. "Stay to dinner with us and we can all talk the business over, and Margaret will tell you what is best to do. I'm sorry for your sake, Captain, that I missed those birds."

"No," replied Frederic, "I really couldn't stay to dinner; besides, Ransome said you already have company."

Mr. Blennerhassett smiled, as he remarked: "Company! We always have company or, what is the same, we are always ready for it. We set a good table every day and, if any guests come, we never have to apologize. As to the company, I suppose it is Mr. Reed, wife, and daughter, from Marietta. They were coming over to-day. Now, Margaret, do you know what I am going to do after dinner?"

"Not going shooting again, I hope?" said his wife.

"No. Let us sit down, Captain, and hear this little story; and Margaret and you can act as my advisers. Three heads are better than one in such a predicament. Now, Mr. Reed owes me five thousand dollars. Last week, his house and furniture, barn and stock were all burned, and he is to-day without a dollar. What shall I do?"

"Loan him some money to start again," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, quickly.

"Take his notes and give him a long time in which to pay," remarked Frederic.

Mr. Blennerhassett sat for a moment apparently considering the advice which had been offered him; then he continued:

"I am greatly obliged to my kind advisers. I had made up my mind to give him the choice of two evils; either a receipt in full to square the debt, or to let the old debt stand and give him a present of an order on the store in Marietta for five thousand dollars. Now I think my plan is best."

"It certainly is—for him," remarked Frederic.

"What's best for him will be best for me, won't it Margaret?" asked Blennerhassett, as he looked inquiringly into his wife's face.

"In the future, it surely will be, Harman," she answered, quietly.

"Then that's settled," said Blennerhassett, cheerfully, "and he may choose his own way about it. What do you wish to see me about?" he added, turning to Frederic.

"To say we've caught William, the negro who stole your box of candles, and Justice Parker is waiting for you to come over and identify the goods before he orders William to be flogged."

Mrs. Blennerhassett turned towards Frederic and said in an appealing tone:

"I am sorry for the foolish man; I pity him. Cannot the punishment be made as light as possible?"

"The punishment for stealing candles ought to be light, hadn't it, Captain?" asked Blennerhassett. Without evincing any appreciation of his own joke, he continued: "Well, do you know, as soon as I missed those candles, before I could get any more here from Marietta, I went to work on a substitute. I knew that

animal substances when left in moist places, or under water, turned to adipocere, and I thought it might take the place of spermaceti. So, a week ago, I put some meat in an inlet in the river to undergo a change. This morning I went to learn the result."

"If it was a success," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "I insist that you shall not appear against poor William."

Frederic remarked: "If the theft has led to such a valuable discovery you could afford to be easy with him."

"No," said Blennerhassett, laughing, "William is doomed. The fishes have devoured all the meat, and my theory remains undemonstrated for the present. I suppose I must go with you and ease poor Parker's mind," Blennerhassett continued, as he arose, "it won't take long—only across the river. I'll be ready soon. You stay here, Captain, and entertain Mrs. Blennerhassett."

"It will be the other way, Mr. Blennerhassett," said Frederic. "I shall be the one who will be entertained."

"Just as like as not," replied Blennerhassett with a smile. "Do you know, Captain, if you had a nice little wife—like mine—I should be the happiest man in the world."

"I am sure I should," said Frederic, looking at Mrs. Blennerhassett, "but why should you be so pleased?"

Blennerhassett replied: "I should have my own wife, and I should insist upon being a friend to yours." With a playful glance at Frederic, and a loving smile to his wife, whose face quickly returned it, he left the room. Turning to Frederic, Mrs. Blennerhassett remarked:

"My husband is unusually jovial to-day. I don't think it is because you have caught William."

"Nor I," said Frederic, quickly. "It is the joy that always comes to the heart when it has decided to do a noble action, such as he will do in Mr. Reed's case.

What a happy life you must have, Mrs. Blennerhassett. This constant sunshine of the soul must make your home as near a heaven as the world can show."

She rejoined playfully: "Such thoughts, when expressed by a young man, lead me to think you are casting an eye into the future. I wish you might have as happy a home as ours."

"A hopeless wish, I am sorry to say," said he, "it might have been, but I shall never marry."

"But why?" she cried. "That's woman's way, I know, to ask such a question; but, Captain Clarke, as a true friend, I ask you again, why?"

"Because I have had a sad experience," he said, bitterly.

"But," remarked Mrs. Blennerhassett, with a look of interest and concern showing itself in her face, "if one experience has been sad, another may be sweet."

He replied somewhat brusquely: "If one woman's perfidy has broken my heart, I shall not trust in woman's love to make it whole again."

"And yet, my dear Captain," she continued, looking up into his face with her eyes full of sympathy, "there is not in the wide world anything that can make it whole again but the love of a true woman."

"I am tempted to tell you the story," rejoined Frederic, noticing the sympathetic look in her face. They resumed their seats and Frederic began:

"I am the only son of a rich farmer in one of the eastern states. I fell in love with one of our servants, a young and handsome girl of good family; but, being an orphan, forced to work for her support."

"And your father refused?"

"No, like a dutiful son, I told him of my choice before I spoke to her and he consented. I proposed and she accepted me."

"Thus far the course of true love runs smooth," said Mrs. Blennerhassett.

"You could never imagine what parted us," cried Frederic, "so I will say it in one word—politics! I chanced to speak in severe terms of a public character, as a man whom I believed then and I believe now to be a villain. He shall be nameless. She resented my remarks and said she would never marry me until I retracted my words against him."

"Thus far you are to blame," she continued, "you were the aggressor and should have shown you loved the woman more than you hated the man, and you would have conquered."

"Perhaps you are right," he rejoined, "but mark the sequel. By a most miraculous coincidence, which I will not explain now, within fifteen minutes of our quarrel, she met the very man about whom we had had the controversy. She was in tears; he asked the cause, she told him, and he gave her money for having defended him."

As he said this, that old fire, which had smouldered for more than a year, burst into a bright flame, and, unable to restrain his feelings, he rose to his feet and walked excitedly up and down the room.

"And she accepted it?" asked Mrs. Blennerhassett.

"Yes," cried Frederic, as he stopped suddenly before her, "and gloried in it. I would have taken the money from her and thrown it at his feet. It seems he had given her his address. She left home after I came West and sought him. He adopted her. She dresses in silk and rides in her carriage. She says he is her friend. Can you blame me if I look upon her dresses and jewels as the badges of her shame?"

"My poor boy!" said she, rising and extending both her hands to him, "yours was indeed a bitter cup."

Frederic continued: "I left home the day after our quarrel and came to Ohio. I have prospered. When my father dies I shall be a rich man. I shall never

marry, for I still love that woman, but to marry her is impossible."

Blennerhassett entered, dressed for his journey.

"I am all ready, Captain. Good-bye, Margaret, I will be home to dinner," he added, as he gave her a parting kiss. "Mr. Reed and his family are out on the river. I sent Marmaduke to give them a trip to the end of the island. Come, Captain."

"Good-bye, Harman," said his wife, as she raised her face for another kiss. Then, turning to Frederic, she said in an undertone: "Come and see us often. Now I know your story it is my duty to show my interest and friendship."

Frederic replied, "I most assuredly will. Good-bye, my dear Mrs. Blennerhassett. Coming, Mr. Blennerhassett," he added, as he followed his host.

"Why," said Blennerhassett, as Frederic reached his side, "you seem to be less willing to leave Mrs. Blennerhassett than her devoted husband. I must look to this."

Left alone, Mrs. Blennerhassett resumed her seat and thought over the incidents of the last half hour. "What a strange story," she said to herself, "Captain Clarke told me. I wonder who the man was. Someone about whose name there was a halo of romance that awakened the poor girl's sympathetic feelings and made her think he was all that was noble and good. Only a girlish fancy, to be sure, but, with a young girl, fancy is more powerful than reason. With some of us women, fancy is always the stronger."

Her soliloquy was broken in upon by the entrance of Ransome, who bowed to his mistress and said: "A gen'leman and two pooty ladies and a little boy have been walking about in the grounds. I saw them sometime ago, but he didn't see me."

As Ransome finished he looked somewhat apprehensively towards his mistress as though fearing he would

be reproved for not reporting the intrusion sooner. His mistress asked:

"Did you ever see him before?"

"No," said Ransome, "but he is a handsome gen'leman, and the ladies are the most beautifullest—"

"That will do, Ransome. Extend Mrs. Blennerhassett's compliments, and say my husband is away but will soon return. Ask the gentleman and ladies to come in and my husband will show them the beauties of the island."

As Ransome left the room, he said, aside, "I can say the come in, but I'm afraid I can't recomember all that," and he went out shaking his old white head. Left alone once more, she again fell to soliloquizing.

"When I married, I had a fancy that Harman would become a great orator, enter Parliament—become—why not—a premier; but he disliked politics and disputation—preferred study and seclusion to life in London, and so we are buried in the wilderness, with everything to make life happy but with not one thing to make it great."

Ransome entered suddenly, his face indicating that he had information of the greatest importance to communicate.

"The gen'leman says," he began, excitedly, "that he was curious and so he landed—but he can't stop—but he sent his card," and he passed it to his mistress, with a low bow.

Mrs. Blennerhassett read the card. "Aaron Burr!" she cried, "Aaron Burr—he was Vice-President of the United States. No man ever came nearer to being President. I must see him." Turning to Ransome, she said: "Tell the gentleman that I must insist upon his accepting the hospitalities of my house."

As Ransome left the room he shook his head affirmatively and soliloquized: "I can recomember that. I have said that afore."

If Frederic could have looked into the great hall at that moment he would have thought that Mrs. Blennerhassett was the victim of some great excitement. She walked up and down the room as he had done. Having no listener, her over-charged feelings sought vent in words.

"How fortunate," she cried, "the man of all others who can tell me in what way my husband can best use his knowledge to secure his advancement and for the good of his adopted country. My fancy survives; my ambition is still strong, and if woman's wit can accomplish it, my husband shall yet fill the station in life for which his talents fit him." A look of triumph showed itself in her face as she concluded—"and which his wife would try to adorn."

When the party had landed from the boat, Colonel Burr, with little Aaron in his arms, led the way into the virgin isle, closely followed by Theodosia and Kate who, school-girl fashion, twined their arms about each other and seemed to enjoy the walk as though they had, in fact, been children just let loose from school. Burr did not actually lead the way, for he had directed one of the boatmen to go ahead and with his boat-hook break down the underbrush wherever it was likely to interfere with the comfortable progress of the ladies.

Little Aaron was delighted. He was greatly attached to his grandfather, and, like most children, was decidedly fond of being carried about. He laughed and sang, in his infantile way, to the great amusement and pleasure of the company.

While Burr was listening to his grandson's numerous questions, and answering them to the best of his ability, he was also constantly called upon by his daughter and his protégé to explain this or that object of wonderment. During it all, however, his sharp eye and active brain were both busy on an entirely different problem.

Yes, among those trees in that little grove it would be easy to store away, out of sight, provisions for a thousand men; that natural cave would afford a fine place of concealment for rifles and munitions of war. In that little glade, surrounded by tall trees with wide-spreading branches, his recruits could be drilled in the art of war without attracting attention from the residents of either Ohio or Virginia. Yes, this was the ideal place in which to organize, and from which to start on his great expedition. His strategic eye had discovered its availability and fitness, and his military knowledge had confirmed the first impression.

On their return to the boat, Burr looked eagerly in every direction to see if any member of the resident family, or any of the servants were in sight. None were visible. Burr thought that so large a party might appear formidable, so he decided to return to the boat, send his companions back to the raft and present his respects in person. As they neared the boat, he discovered that the young colored boy was not in it, but that James Gray was there instead. Requesting his companions to wait a moment, he went to the end of the little landing and asked Gray in a stern voice why he was there, and where the negro boy was. Gray replied that the boy had been taken sick, and with difficulty had rowed back to the raft. He added, "Under the circumstances, I thought it best for me to come back with the boat."

"It was very kind of you," said Burr, dryly. "Now that you are in the boat I wish you to stay there and not to leave it without my knowledge."

As he said this, he gave the man a glance from his black eyes that pierced him like the stab from a knife.

When Burr returned from the landing, to meet his companions, he saw an old colored man bowing to them and expressing what they understood to be an invitation to visit the mansion.

"Are you one of Mr. Blennerhassett's servants?" asked Burr, in his most courteous manner.

"Yes, sah," replied Ransome, making a low bow.

"We are trespassers upon your beautiful island," said Burr; "I had intended to ask permission for our little party to examine its beauties, but met no one to whom I could address such an appeal. I was on my way to the house to offer my apologies. Will you kindly bear them for me? Our time is limited, but if you will present this card to your master, he will know who I am." Ransome took the card and returned with the greatest possible speed to the house. Turning to Theodosia, Burr said: "They either will, or will not receive us. If they do," and he smiled as he said it, "I hope I shall make a pleasant and profitable acquaintance."

"I hope," said Kate, "that the lord of this manor will prove to be your Prince Fortunatus, and that you will win wealth and fame together."

"So do I," said Theodosia, "the River of Fate cannot run always in a straight line; there must be some bend or turn which, taken at the right time, will lead to success."

At this moment, Ransome reappeared from the house, Burr offered an arm to each of his companions and made a movement as though he intended to return to the boat. Ransome called after them: "Sah! Sah!! Please wait a moment, sah!"

The party turned and Ransome soon reached them, his face glowing with pleasurable excitement. "Sah, Massa is away, but Missus presents her compliments and insists that you accept her hospitality." This was a long speech, but Ransome had repeated it so frequently in the past that he had become quite proficient in its delivery. Repressing an exhibition of any personal satisfaction of the invitation, Burr turned to his companions and asked them if they would like to accept

Mrs. Blennerhassett's invitation. They signified their willingness, and the party walked slowly towards the house, Ransome leading the way with all the pomp of a major domo.

During the time occupied by Ransome in making his final trip, Mrs. Blennerhassett had an opportunity to inspect herself in a mirror and see if her head-dress was properly and becomingly arranged; then, taking a position at a respectable distance from the door, she anxiously awaited the advent of her guests. Ransome threw the door open and the party entered, Burr leading the way. As he took Mrs. Blennerhassett's hand, outstretched in welcome, she said: "Welcome to Blennerhassett Island. We are honored by this visit."

Burr bowed low over the speaker's hand and touched it lightly with his lips. As he raised his head he said, fixing his eyes upon her beautiful face, "You flatter us, it is we who are honored by being received as your guests." Mrs. Blennerhassett smiled and said in reply:

"Pardon the importunity of my invitation, Mr. Burr, but we have so few visitors from the East—" Burr interrupted her with a graceful wave of his hand.

"Madam, pardon for our intrusion rather than for your hospitality. As in the fairy books, we have found that those who land upon the enchanted isle must enter the bower of beauty and pay homage to the princess. Allow me, madam, to present my only child, my daughter, Theodosia." The ladies shook hands. Burr turning, saw Kate. "Ah! I have been unjust, and untrue, for here is my other child—my adopted daughter, Kate." Kate advanced and the handshaking ceremony was repeated.

Suddenly, Mrs. Blennerhassett cried out: "But, Colonel Burr, you have not completed your introductions. To whom does this beautiful little boy belong?" As she said this she rushed forward, and grasping little Aaron, lifted him from the floor, pressed him to her

bosom, and kissed him again and again. Little Aaron, though somewhat astonished by the warmth of her embrace, was too much of a Burr to lose his self-possession, so he inquired: "Have you got a little boy?"

"Yes, thank Heaven," cried Mrs. Blennerhassett, "not only one, but three of them. They are up-stairs in the nursery, but you shall go with me in a little while and see them." As she said this, she placed the child upon the floor and he ran at once to his mother's side.

Ransome had stood near the door, evidently anticipating some order from his mistress. He was not disappointed. Mrs. Blennerhassett motioned to her guests and said: "Pray be seated. Ransome, have three extra plates laid for dinner."

Burr and his companions had seated themselves, as requested, but when he heard the direction given to Ransome he arose, and, bowing politely, said:

"But, Madam, we cannot intrude in so bold a way upon your privacy."

Mrs. Blennerhassett assumed a bantering way: "You are in the bower of the princess, sir, and the fairy books say that none could leave it without her permission, unless they killed the dragon that guarded the entrance. Go, Ransome."

Burr, quick to catch the spirit of the occasion, replied: "Believe me, Madam, I would rather fight the dragon than—"

Mrs. Blennerhassett interrupted him with a laugh: "Remain?"

Once more Burr fixed his beautiful eyes upon the equally beautiful ones of his hostess. Once more he bowed low and said in those dulcet tones that had charmed so many women and were destined to charm so many more: "no—than disobey your slightest wish."

The ladies had removed their outer garments and

Burr, with all the grace of a courtier, took them from them. Mrs. Blennerhassett advanced to receive them. As she walked across the room to place them upon an old-fashioned, but beautifully carved table, she said to herself: "He is such a man as that girl of Clarke's might have worshipped." Returning to join the company she inquired: "Did you enjoy your trip down the river, Mrs.—"

"Pardon me, Madam," said Burr, "you have already divined, of course, that my daughter is married. It is my fault that I did not introduce her by her proper name. Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston, wife of Mr. Joseph Alston of South Carolina." Turning to Theodosia, Burr said gayly: "What would your husband say if he knew that I had appropriated you entirely to myself?"

Mrs. Blennerhassett looked at Kate: "And is this other young lady—"

Burr answered playfully: "No, she is Miss Embleton, with no end of suitors, but with a heart fondly clinging—"

Kate laughingly repelled the insinuation. "Mr. Burr, you are wrong; you know you are." As Kate spoke she arose, and, although her motive was not suspected by her companions, she turned away to conceal some unbidden tears, for, like a flash, a picture of her last meeting with Frederic had passed before her eyes. Theodosia now arose and walked towards her friend.

"No, Kate," said she, "you are wrong. You are fond of clinging—to me," as she said this she caught the young girl in her arms, they turned, and Theodosia continued—"and to father."

Burr advanced towards them, extending an arm to each. The arm was taken. He made a short detour which brought them face to face with Mrs. Blennerhassett.

"Am I not a father to be envied, Mrs. Blennerhassett, with two such daughters?"

"But," said Kate, "if I should marry some young gentleman whom you did not fancy, you would disown me and give all your love to Theodosia and Gamp."

"Pardon my curiosity," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "but who is Gamp? Another young lady?"

"No," replied Theodosia, "Gamp is this little boy, my only son. Father gave him the nickname and calls him by no other."

Burr turned to Mrs. Blennerhassett: "His infant lips first spoke the word Gampy to his grandfather. I turned that into Gampillo or Gamp, and, being a word made precious by association, I prefer it to his full name of Aaron Burr Alston." Then turning to Kate, he said, gravely: "But, Miss Embleton, let me not forget to say I shall never disown you, for you have given me the best of reasons for believing you will never marry a man whom I cannot respect."

Theodosia said, with a smile: "I think you can trust her, father."

"You know you can," cried Kate energetically.

"I know I do," replied Burr, decidedly. "My protégés never desert or disappoint me." Throwing a glance to his daughter, he said: "I heard good news from Vanderlyn the other day, he whom I rightly named the Genius of the Roadside."

Mrs. Blennerhassett looked interested and remarked: "There must be a romance connected with that poetic name, the Genius of the Roadside; I am a lover of the romantic—"

"I will tell you the story, madam, with pleasure, but as I am a personage in it, kindly free me from the charge of intentional egotism."

Mrs. Blennerhassett bowed politely: "Certainly, Mr. Burr, and pray do not detract from your own due for fear of being so misjudged."

Burr responded to her very courteous remark by a polite bow. "The story is this: Some years ago, I was called to Albany on business. On my way, a wheel-tire needed repairs and I stopped at a blacksmith's shop for the purpose. While waiting, I walked around the outside of the smithy where my attention was attracted by a sketch in chalk upon a barn door. It was capitally done and I turned towards the smithy to ask the blacksmith the name of the artist, when I saw a small boy regarding me with anxious eyes. 'Who drew that picture?' said I. 'I did,' replied the boy, to my astonishment. I found he was an orphan and was working for a farmer in the town. I gave him my card and told him when he was ready to begin the battle of life to come to my house in New York. In less than six months, the Genius of the Roadside presented himself at my door. I sent him to Paris to study art, and his last letter says he is on the road to fame and fortune."

Mrs. Blennerhassett remarked, approvingly: "How happy that pleasing news must make you."

"It does," replied Burr, "I know of nothing that gives greater joy than to encourage and aid those who are poor, but talented and ambitious. The greatest pleasure I have ever known was found in directing my daughter's studies."

"Yes," said Theodosia, "and such terrible scoldings as you used to give me about my handwriting and my grammar."

"Yes," interjected Kate, "my lectures came in letters. They all began with a good scolding, had a lecture in the middle, and ended with words so kind that, like sweets after a nauseous medicine, the disagreeable flavor was all taken away."

It occurred to Burr that they had devoted considerable time to purely personal matters. He was afraid

that perhaps this kind of conversation had been carried to an obtrusive extent, so he remarked:

"My dear young ladies, we have been very thoughtless to take so much time to talk about ourselves, to the disregard, and, no doubt, discomfort of our hostess." Turning to Mrs. Blennerhassett, he inquired with an apparent air of great interest: "Is your husband a native of New England or Maryland, Mrs. Blennerhassett?"

"Neither, sir," she replied. "He was born in Hampshire, England. His father was an Irish gentleman, but his parents were visiting in England."

Burr made another inquiry: "Was he in the English army?"

"No," she replied, "his inclination has always been to literature and science. He went to school at Westminster, but graduated at Trinity College, Dublin."

Burr was persistent in his questioning: "Did he practise law?"

"Yes," she answered, "and was made Doctor of Laws in 1790. The troubles in his native land led him to sell his estates to Baron Ventry, and he afterwards came to England, where we met."

"Like a true knight errant," said Burr, resuming his playful manner, "he went in search of his lady love and found her."

"Hardly that," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, with a laugh, "for he had a sister in England, the wife of Admiral de Courcy."

"He that was Lord Kinsale?" Burr asked, quickly.

"Yes," she replied, "I am English, and yet our people pride themselves on their independence. My father was Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of Man. My grandfather was General Agnew"—

Burr, who had been listening intently, broke in: "Who fell at Germantown?"

"Yes, sir, did you ever see him?"

Burr drew himself up proudly. "Neither your grandfather nor myself were taken prisoners during the Revolution, and we never met. But I have heard that he was a brave man and died like a true British soldier, hating all rebels and loving his king."

Mrs. Blennerhassett continued her story: "We removed to New York in 1797. My husband traveled through the States in search of a place in which to make our home. He bought the upper part of this island and we settled here in 1798, moving, at first, into a blockhouse."

"And in seven years only," cried Theodosia, "you have made this wilderness blossom like a rose—"

"And built this beautiful mansion," said Kate.

Burr added: "Which, in its design and execution, shows the possession of exquisite taste by its owners."

Mrs. Blennerhassett was pleased with the deftly worded inquiries and remarks which enabled her to give some particulars of her past life, and that of her husband, without seeming to obtrude them upon her guests.

"Yes, my husband's property enabled us to gratify our tastes. Living away from the busy world, this island becomes our world, and you can imagine my husband and myself are never happier than when kind fortune sends some guest to our door who can tell us what is going on in the States, and dear old England." Approaching footsteps and a voice were heard outside. "My husband has returned," she cried.

As Blennerhassett entered the room, she arose to meet him. He was so nearsighted that he did not notice the presence of the guests who were seated some distance from the door.

"It's all right, Margaret," he cried, cheerfully, "William escaped without a lash. Parker was indig-

nant, but I couldn't identify the candles could I, my dear, and so—"

But, at this point, Mrs. Blennerhassett thought that his explanation had proceeded far enough. She grasped her husband's arm and said in a low tone to him, "But Harman, we have guests. Let me present you." She advanced with her husband towards the little party who arose as they approached. "Mr. Burr, allow me to introduce my husband."

Colonel Burr advanced with extended hand. "I am delighted," said he, "to make Mr. Blennerhassett's acquaintance."

Blennerhassett drew back, a look of uncertainty upon his face. "Burr!" he exclaimed. "What Burr? Not Aaron Burr!"

Burr bowed low, and said in dignified, measured tones, "Colonel Aaron Burr, at your service."

Blennerhassett looked disturbed. The thought ran through his mind, "The man who killed Hamilton—" then, realizing that ordinary politeness required that he should speak, he said:

"You are welcome, sir, to the hospitalities—"

Mrs. Blennerhassett remarked, apologetically, to Burr, "My husband is very nearsighted. Harman," she said, ad ressing her husband: "Colonel Burr is waiting to shake hands with you."

Blennerhassett drew himself up and said with hauteur, "I regret it, sir, but I cannot give my hand to the murderer of General Hamilton." A look of astonishment showed itself in Mrs. Blennerhassett's face. "Remember, Harman," she cried, "he is your guest, and that his daughters are present."

Burr comprehended the situation. It had ever been thus; always prejudged before he had an opportunity to speak a word in his own defence, presuming that he had been disposed to speak that word. But he regretted the situation in which Mrs. Blennerhassett

had been placed by her husband's untoward remark, and, like a true gentleman, he hastened to rescue her from her dilemma. He turned to her:

"Madam, do not fear. I shall not transcend the bounds of hospitality." Addressing Blennerhassett, he said: "Sir, my friend Hamilton, whom I shot, would not have used so harsh a term as murderer."

Here Blennerhassett, who had evidently based his opinion upon Mr. Ashelyn's remarks concerning the duel, cried, "But he was at your mercy!"

Burr replied in a spirited manner: "He was the aggressor and met the fate that any man invites when he slanders a gentleman and then refuses reparation. Slander has slain more than the sword."

Blennerhassett was not convinced. "Duelling is not an attribute of a gentleman or a hero. The polished Greek knew nothing of it. The noble Roman was above it. Rome held in equal detestation the man who exposed his life unnecessarily, and he who refused to expose it when the public good required it. Her heroes were superior to private contests; they indulged in no vengeance except against the enemies of their country."

Mrs. Blennerhassett was almost overcome by her emotions. She knew the firmness of her husband's character when his sentiments were strongly aroused. She divined that her guest was equally set in his opinions. A collision of highly wrought and excited tempers seemed imminent. She ran to her husband and grasped him by the arm, while Theodosia and Kate took their posts on either side of Burr. Little Aaron had wandered off to the other end of the room, evidently much interested and amused by the pretty pictures that he had found in a book which he had taken from the table without permission.

On his part, Burr felt that unless his visit was to come to an untimely conclusion, and all the visions that

he had formed of Prince Fortunatus were to vanish in thin air, he must, in some way, explain to the master of the house the event which, it was evident, he so thoroughly misunderstood.

"Ladies," Burr began, "you will bear me witness that this unhappy discussion is not of my choosing, and I trust will forgive me if I live over again that sad affair by recalling some particulars that must be unknown to Mr. Blennerhassett." Turning to Mr. Blennerhassett he asked, in ringing tones: "Sir, suppose a mean and cowardly individual should slander you and not stand up to it when cornered? Suppose you should forbear and forbear, forgive and forgive; yes, even stoop to remonstrate? If you had no choice except to slink out of sight, a wretch degraded and despised, or meet the calumniator on the field and silence him, what would you do? You are an Irish gentleman and I can answer for you. You would meet him, as I did! Supposing when you stood up to fire he caught your eye and quailed under it like a convicted felon? You would kill him, as I did! Supposing you should find his last will and testament to read like the confessions of a penitent monk; you would despise him, as I do!"

Blennerhassett thought for a moment. His wife looked into his face, anxiously. At last, she saw those signs which, to her practised eye, indicated that the severity of his former judgment was to be relaxed. Turning to Burr, he said:

"Had you never braved death but in a duel, your words would have no effect upon me, but you both did your duty in the army of your country, and I had forgotten, we are not Greeks or Romans, but the slaves of cruel modern customs. Sir, there is my hand. Welcome to Blennerhassett Island!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE SONG OF THE DRUM

BURR had carried his point. He and his party had received a cordial welcome from both the Prince and the Princess, and, although he did not express his intention to his companions, his mind was made up to remain upon the island until he had secured every possible advantage from the new acquaintance that he had made. He was not sorry, all things considered, that there had been a misunderstanding and some explanations had become necessary. The result had been that he was now on a much better footing with his host and hostess than he would have been had the visit been but a casual call with no attendant exciting circumstances. The incidents which had transpired had broken the ice and had opened several avenues through which he could present his schemes to his entertainers.

The dinner was very enjoyable. In addition to Colonel Burr's party, there were Mr. and Mrs. Reed and their daughter. No reference was made during the repast to the business relations between Mr. Blennerhassett and Mr. Reed, but the pleased expression on the latter gentleman's face, and the looks of contentment upon those of his wife and daughter, indicated that Mr. Blennerhassett's kind treatment of them in their financial difficulties was greatly appreciated.

After dinner, Burr walked down to the little boat-landing. The boat was there and James Gray was its sole occupant. Burr entered the boat and signified his

desire to be rowed back to the raft. There he obtained the trunk containing his personal wearing apparel, and, also, those belonging to his daughter and Kate. These were placed in the boat. Then Burr called the hands together and informed them that he would probably stay for a week or ten days at Blennerhassett Island. He had decided to retain Tom Walters, one of the boatmen, and Bob, the negro boy. He paid Gray and the other boatman for their services and told them that he had no further employment for them. Then Walters rowed him and the baggage back to the island. He then returned to the raft, Burr informing him that he would signal him if he wished the boat at any time.

The evening of the first day was passed very pleasantly in Mr. Blennerhassett's library. The walls were covered with bookcases, upon the shelves of which but few vacant spaces could be found, for his library was extensive, consisting mainly of valuable scientific works. A door opened from the library into the laboratory in which he carried on his scientific experiments—which, unfortunately, had been experimental only for they had resulted in no new and valuable discoveries. Burr felt equally as well at home in a library as he did upon the battle-field. On the latter, he commanded men; in the former, he commanded authorities, and marshalled them in line as though they had been infantry, cavalry, and artillery. On this first evening, he deftly introduced the subject which was uppermost in his mind. He took occasion, however, to employ only his literary infantry, for the time had not come to open fire with his literary artillery, or to have his literary cavalry make the final charge.

The wearied party soon retired so as to arise at an early hour, and the first day of what was to become a most memorable epoch in American history had passed.

The next day, Mr. and Mrs. Blennerhassett devoted themselves exclusively to the entertainment of their

guests. There was a boating trip upon the river, in the course of which Mrs. Blennerhassett pointed out many natural beauties which would ordinarily have escaped the eye of a casual observer. Then there was another quiet journey into the uncleared portion of the island.

Towards evening, the sky became overcast and dark clouds shrouded both moon and stars from sight. After supper, Ransome sought his master, bearing a request from the other servants that they might be allowed to take the big boat and go fishing by torch-light. The request was overheard by Burr, and when Mrs. Blennerhassett asked him if he would like to accompany the party he gladly consented. Then Kate asked if she might be allowed to go, but as there were to be no other ladies in the party, Burr convinced her that her request was inappropriate, and induced her to withdraw it.

The party set off, many of the number holding aloft huge, flaring torches which emitted not only light, but a great quantity of pungent smoke. Mrs. Blennerhassett, Theodosia, and Kate watched the party from the little boat-landing. When a good catch was made, the cries of the pleased fishermen were borne across the water, the little party of listeners entering into their enjoyment. Finally, the zest of the fishermen was satisfied and they started on their homeward trip. When they had progressed a short distance, one of the negro boatmen struck up in a loud, resonant voice the well-known patriotic air called "The Song of the Drum."

Burr sat in the stern of the boat, the light of the torches falling upon his face. As he heard the well-known words "'Twas in the merry month of May," the boat, its occupants, the flaring torches, and the darkly-flowing river vanished from his view and he saw another sight. His mind went back to the evening of the Fourth of July, 1804, just one week previous

to the meeting on the field at Weehawken Heights. The occasion was the annual dinner of the New York branch of the Society of the Cincinnati, of which Alexander Hamilton was president. Burr was a member, but he took no active part in the festivities. He sat with his eyes fixed upon the man who, in one short week, he was to meet upon the field of honor.

As the fact of the forth-coming duel was known to but few persons, the real cause of Hamilton's apparent lack of interest in the proceedings could not have been divined by those present. He was usually the life of such gatherings, entering into them, even at his age, with all the enthusiasm and vivacity of a young man. When requested to sing a song, he refused. When the request was again preferred, he refused for the second time, but, in response to the universal demand that he should sing one song at least, he finally said, "Well, if you must have it, I will. You know I can only sing one song anyway." Then he sang "The Song of the Drum," but it was noticed by many, who afterwards referred to it, that it was not given with the dash and spirit that he had shown on former occasions.

While this was passing through Burr's mind the boat had reached the landing. Burr joined the little party and they walked towards the house, while the fishermen took their catch to the storehouse in which meat, fish, vegetables, and other food supplies for the great house were kept.

As they walked slowly along, Kate remarked: "The song sung by the boatmen was really enchanting as the melody came floating over the water."

"Yes," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "I like that song and I don't like it. I like it because it is patriotic and because the melody is simple but sweet."

"What is your reason for disliking it?" inquired Burr.

"Because," remarked Mrs. Blennerhassett, "our

boys have been able to learn the words of two stanzas only, and they have sung them over and over so many times that I have really become tired of them. I have written some poetry myself, but I find it impossible to write anything to match the ones they have."

"I am no singer," Burr remarked, "but I have heard the song a great many times. I have a fairly good memory, and if I can recall the words of some of the other stanzas I shall be pleased to give you a copy of them."

"You may be sure," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "that I shall be greatly pleased to receive them, and that pleasure will be shared by our boys."

The next morning, when they gathered at the breakfast table, Burr laid a folded sheet of paper beside his plate as he took his seat. The fact was that every word in "The Song of the Drum" had been indelibly engraved upon his memory while he sat that night with his eyes fixed upon the man who had been his foe for thirty years, so he had little difficulty in writing out the words of the song after he had retired to his room. When the morning meal was over, he passed the written sheet to Mrs. Blennerhassett, remarking that it contained, as nearly as he could remember, the missing stanzas of the song.

"Oh! please read it to us, Mrs. Blennerhassett," cried Kate, and her request was echoed by Burr and his daughter. They had heard that their hostess possessed marked elocutionary ability and this seemed to offer a favorable opportunity for the display of her powers.

Mrs. Blennerhassett consented graciously, and delivered with great fervor and dramatic expression the words of the song:

I

"'Twas in the merry month of May,
When bees from flower to flower did hum,
Soldiers through the town marched gay,
The village flew to the sound of the drum.

From windows lasses looked a score,
Neighbors met at every door;
Sergeant twirled his sash so gory,
And talked of honor, wounds, and glory.

II

The sergeant stroked his moustachios,
On a farmer's door gave ringing blows,
And said, "My boy, the time has come
To shoulder your musket and follow the drum."
Then father and the grandfather, too,
The hammer and sledge on the anvil threw;
And three recruits from that house did come
For they'd all decided to follow the drum.

III

The cobbler bald was soling a shoe,
The waxen thread was pulling through;
The sergeant entered and took a seat,
And with these words did the cobbler greet:
"Of course, my friend, you've heard the news,
We're going to war and we need some shoes,
As we can't wait, you'll have to come,
So pack up your kit and follow the drum."

IV

The tailor slim with legs so loose,
Was pressing a seam with a red-hot goose;
A kick at the door, it opened wide
And the burly sergeant in did stride.
"We're off to the war, my little friend,
And we want a tailor our clothes to mend,
So pick up your goose, don't look so glum,
'Tis a glorious trade to follow the drum."

V

The clergyman sat his study within
Devising new ways to battle with sin;
A knock was heard at the parsonage door,
And the sergeant's sword clanged on the floor.

"We're going to war, and when we die,
We shall need a man of God near by;
We're all of us bound to Kingdom Come,
So bring your Bible and follow the drum."

VI

A pretty lass was milking a cow,
The sergeant went up and made a bow;
"We're off to the war, my pretty maid;"
"My blessing go with you, brave sir," she said.
"I'll stay at home, and lint will pick;
Take care of the old folks, and nurse the sick;
And if at last the worst should come,
I'll dress like a man and follow the drum."

VII

"Three old women—the first was lame,
The second was blind and the third nigh dumb—
To stay at home they said was a shame,
"We'll follow the men, and follow the drum!
Our wills are good, but long is the way,
To catch the soldiers we'll all of us try,
For where there's a will there's always a way,
If our strength gives out, like men we'll die."

As the hostess finished her recital of the patriotic lines, she was greeted with applause by her auditors.

"I feel justified in applauding you for the manner in which you read that song, Mrs Blennerhassett," said Theodosia, "but I cannot so heartily applaud the cause that led to the writing of it. In other words, I abhor warlike conflicts, and heartily wish that the Prince of Peace could and would end all strife."

Burr glanced at his daughter. He could not blame her for so frankly expressing her real sentiments, for he had taught her from her earliest youth to be brave and never to be afraid to speak out plainly what she honestly thought, but he feared that the sentiments she had expressed might be too heartily endorsed by her

listeners, and that endorsement might militate against some of his plans to be unfolded in the future, so he said:

"War is the sacrifice of nations. If man atones for his sins by blood, why should not nations?"

Burr rarely made the mistake of saying too much, but a glance at his daughter's face showed him that this time he had done so. His allusion to a man's atoning for his sins with his blood had evidently brought back to his daughter's mind the incident of the duel, and he regretted very much that he had not allowed the matter to drop without comment. This regret was more intensified when he saw his daughter rise from her seat and, with a few incoherent words of apology, start to leave the room. Kate sprang to her feet, and, placing her arm about Theodosia's waist, accompanied her from the room.

As the meal was over, the remainder of the party left their places. Burr, turning to Mrs. Blennerhassett, explained that his daughter was subject to such nervous attacks which were, however, slight in their nature and not of long duration. He would go at once to her room and learn her exact condition. Then Mrs. Blennerhassett went to attend to her multifarious housekeeping duties while her husband made his way to his laboratory, being engaged in the preparation of a chemical formula for preserving meats and fish without ice, from which he expected, as he usually did, great results.

Burr reached the door of his daughter's room. His request for admittance was answered by Kate, who held the door ajar and said, playfully, that gentlemen could not be admitted as they were not needed. Mrs. Alston, she informed him, would soon recover and they would join him shortly.

Burr went down stairs somewhat ill at ease with himself. His daughter had told him time and time

again that she did not blame him for the course that he had taken in dealing with General Hamilton. She had told him that she thought that he was right and that his adversary had met the fate that he deserved. But yet, he had noticed that any allusion to the duel or to bloodshed of any kind brought on those nervous attacks, and he felt that in the future he must be careful not to refer in her presence to any undertakings except those of a peaceful nature. To that extent, he knew he would have his daughter's consent and assistance, but he felt sure that she would shrink from contact with any scheme which would eventuate in hostilities of a warlike nature.

With these thoughts in his mind, he emerged from the great doorway, and looked across the broad lawn which, like a green carpet, reached down to the water's edge where it joined the blue of the river. Strange it is, that it is only the hand of Nature that can make these two colors harmonize so as not to offend the eye, for the light that Nature throws upon them, blending them so harmoniously, cannot be imitated by the hand of man.

Then his eye caught a novel and pretty sight. The three little boys of the family and his own little grandson were playing soldiers. Dominick Blennerhassett was about seven years of age, his brother Harman was five, while Lewis was about the same age as little Aaron. Dominick had a small toy drum upon which he was pounding. The other three were soldiers, each being armed with a stick which was, of course, supposed to be a gun. At this sight, Burr's martial ardor revived. For the time being, he forgot his daughter's sentiments and objections. Calling to the little boys, they came running towards him. Then he took the drum and gave them a few points of rudimentary instruction in military tactics. He made the four little boys toe a straight line; then he showed them how to hold their

sticks in some degree approaching military precision. He told them which foot to put forward first when he gave the order to march. Then, beating the drum loudly, the man who had led a brilliant charge against the enemy in the white heat of the great battle at Monmouth, marched proudly down the gravel path followed by his line of infant soldiers.

CHAPTER XVIII

A DREAM OF EMPIRE

ALL the rooms in the palace in the woods were not so large in size nor sombre in tone as the great hall. There were smaller and daintily furnished rooms, in the arranging of which Mrs. Blennerhassett had shown herself to be possessed of a fine artistic sense and one capable of producing the most harmonious effects. The drawing-room, so-called, was light, airy, and elegant. The floor was covered with a gaily-colored carpet while rich curtains hung at the windows; classic pictures were upon the walls; several large mirrors were also placed there which were not only beautiful in themselves, but, by reflection, showed the artistic treasures that the room contained. Many choice ornaments, which the modern world calls bric-a-brac or articles of vertu, were displayed advantageously in different parts of the room, while a large cabinet with glass doors, was filled with specimens of wood and stone and metal which had been discovered by either Mr. Blennerhassett or his wife in their walks and rides through their virgin western country.

After breakfast, Mrs. Blennerhassett had taken Theodosia to the drawing-room and had seated her in one of its most luxuriously upholstered chairs.

Then, in her naturally impulsive way, she dropped upon her knees beside Theodosia's chair, took her hands in hers, and looked up into her face.

"Dear, do you feel any worse than you did?" asked Mrs. Blennerhassett.

Just the shade of a smile, a faint, weary smile, passed over Theodosia's face as she replied:

"No worse, my dear friend, and no better."

Mrs. Blennerhassett pressed the sufferer's hand between her own, and said: "But you will soon. I suppose I ought to have told you. I have sent Ransome to Marietta for our dear, good, old doctor, the kindest and best man in the world, and a fine physician, too."

A look indicative of surprise passed over Theodosia's face; then she said, deprecatingly, to her hostess: "You are so kind to such an unwelcome guest as myself."

A slight flush mounted to Mrs. Blennerhassett's face, but the thought instantly flashed through her mind that the one who had spoken was sick. She rejoined, pleasantly, "Visitors are never unwelcome at this house. If they fall sick while here, it is our duty to cure them before we allow them to leave us."

Theodosia grasped both of Mrs. Blennerhassett's hands in hers and pressed them warmly. "Forgive my ungenerous speech," she cried, "but I am afraid your dear good doctor won't understand my case." Then, as if desirous of changing the subject, she asked, "Where is my father?"

Mrs. Blennerhassett rose from the kneeling posture which she had occupied up to this time and, drawing a chair close to Theodosia, sat down beside her. "Your father is having a long talk with Harman. They have been closeted in the library for a couple of hours."

Theodosia, without reflecting, said quickly, "I am sorry."

Mrs. Blennerhassett could not understand the feeling that prompted this remark, so she repeated, inquiringly, "Sorry? Why, what do you mean? Are you so jealous of your father that you cannot allow him to go out of your sight?"

Theodosia started to her feet, took a few steps forward, then turned and faced Mrs. Blennerhassett. "No, no! not that," she said, somewhat abstractedly; she paused a moment and then continued, "He is my guardian angel, but I can trust him away from me for I know that he will never desert me while life remains. But I am afraid he will weary your husband with his talking; he is such an ardent lover of political discussion, a man used to partisan warfare, while your husband is so quiet in his tastes and life."

"A little animated discussion will not do Harman a bit of harm, my dear," replied Mrs. Blennerhassett, "not half so much as it will you if you worry about it. Come, sit down here by me and rest." As she said this, she took Theodosia's hand and drew her back to the chair which she had formerly occupied. Just then, a slight sound attracted Mrs. Blennerhassett's attention, and, looking towards the door, she saw that Ransome had entered the room and was bowing his white head obsequiously. "Why, here's Ransome!" she cried, "Is the doctor coming?"

Ransome ran his fingers through his hair, and then patted the top of his head softly as though trying to get his ideas into proper shape for expression. "The doctor's comin' but he isn't comin'."

Mrs. Blennerhassett did not secure the information that she desired from what Ransome evidently considered a lucid explanation of the situation, so she asked, "Who is not coming?"

Ransome again endeavored to aid his thinking powers and finally replied, "Why Doctor Johnson isn't comin'."

Mrs. Blennerhassett seemed perplexed. "But you said he was coming."

Ransome made a third effort to supply the necessary information. "So he is, but he isn't Dr. Johnson."

By this time, Mrs. Blennerhassett was becoming

vexed at the unsatisfactory nature of Ransome's replies. "Why not, Ransome? You know we always have Dr. Johnson and you should have asked him and no one else to come." There was a slight touch of asperity in her tone, and Ransome knew from past experience that he must make himself clear, and he again tried to unravel the complication which he had himself created. "I did, Missus, but you see Doctor Johnson is sick abed himself, and he was doctoring him, and Doctor Johnson said if he was good enough to doctor him, he was good enough to doctor you."

"I understand now," remarked the lady. "When is he coming?"

Ransome replied, "He came with me but, as he was a stranger, I told him that I would introduce him and make it easier for him."

"That was very thoughtful of you," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "but show him in at once."

As Ransome left the room, Theodosia turned to her hostess and remarked, "Your servant is quite a conversationalist, I should imagine."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Blennerhassett, with a light laugh, "but it is sometimes necessary, as you see, to assist him in finding the point of his own story." Then she added, "He is a great admirer of my husband's education, and Harman has given him many books to read, and they have hunted together, fished together, and argued Scripture together until they have become fast friends, and Ransome looks upon himself as a privileged character."

Ransome opened the door and announced, "Doctor Hosack." As the doctor entered the room, Mrs. Blennerhassett advanced to meet him; as she did so, Theodosia left the chair in which she had been sitting and walking quickly to one of the windows, stood half concealed by the heavy drapery which fell to the floor. Doctor Hosack bowed in a most dignified manner and

said: "Madam, I am sorry to inform you that Doctor Johnson is suffering from malarial fever, and he has delegated me to call on you professionally. You may count on my best service."

At the conclusion of his speech, Mrs. Blennerhassett returned his bow with one as dignified, and extended her hand, saying:

"Doctor Johnson's recommendation makes you welcome to my home and gives me every confidence in your skill."

The doctor stood for a moment, evidently waiting for the lady of the house to state who it was that needed his services. As she did not speak, he finally inquired, "Madam, how can I serve you?"

"My young friend"—she answered. As she turned, she saw that Theodosia was not sitting where she had left her. Her quick eye at once discovered her whereabouts, and, going to the window, she took Theodosia's hand and led her towards the doctor, saying, as she did so: "This is the young lady who desires your professional services. Mrs. Alston, Doctor Hosack."

Theodosia sank languidly into a chair. The doctor drew another towards her and sat down upon the edge of it, in the way peculiar to the medical profession, holding his hat in one hand and his cane in the other, while Mrs. Blennerhassett walked to the window and looked out upon the lawn where the four little boys in charge of a colored nurse, were having a grand romp.

Theodosia looked up into the doctor's face with an expression of incredulity in her own. "Doctor, I am afraid your pills and powders will do me no good. My trouble is mental worry and disquiet which will remain until the cause is removed."

The doctor rejoined: "The case is, doubtless, as I have found it in many others, too much blood. A little bleeding may relieve you."

Theodosia started to her feet, and wringing her hands, cried excitedly, "Yes, blood! that's it. Too much blood—bad blood! That always makes quarrels, doesn't it, sir? and then the bleeding follows. Some die in battle, some on the field of honor in a duel, but few people with bad blood die in their beds, do they, Doctor?" As she finished her somewhat incoherent speech, she threw herself again into the chair. "Bring the swords or the pistols. Let us have the blood drawn at once."

Mrs. Blennerhassett's attention had been attracted from the antics of the children by Theodosia's voice. Every word spoken had been distinctly audible, and as Doctor Hosack approached her, she turned to him with an expression of apprehension in her face.

"I am afraid, Mrs. Blennerhassett, our young friend is going to have a fever. She wanders. Put her to bed, my dear Madam, and, remember, no drink of any kind."

Theodosia had closed her eyes and was consequently unaware of the fact that the physician was not sitting beside her. She opened them suddenly and cried, "Are you ready for the bleeding, Doctor?" As the words escaped her lips, the ubiquitous Ransome entered, as usual, without any premonition of his approach. He held a letter in his hand. When but a few feet distant from Theodosia, he extended the letter towards her and announced:

"A letter for Mrs. Theodosia Burr Alston."

As Doctor Hosack heard this name, he gave an involuntary start and looked inquiringly at Mrs. Blennerhassett. With a delighted cry, Theodosia sprang from her chair and eagerly grasped the letter. She glanced at the superscription.

"I thought so! I am so glad! It is from my husband whom I have not seen since I parted from him in Washington. It seems so long." She broke the

seals and opened the letter in her quick impulsive way. She read the first few lines, then said,

"My dear Madam, and my good doctor, with your kind permission I will go to my room. If this letter tells me that my husband is coming to meet me I shall soon be as well as ever." Pressing the letter to her lips, she left the room, followed by Ransome who, after he had closed the door, gave one of his oily chuckles and then muttered, "This is the funniest crowd that ever came to this house."

As soon as the door was closed, Doctor Hosack turned to Mrs. Blennerhassett. "Pardon my curiosity, Madam, but did your servant say Burr was the lady's name? Do you know her father?"

The lady replied, "Her name was Burr, it is Theodosia Burr Alston. Her father is Colonel Aaron Burr. They are our guests."

"Aaron Burr here!" cried the doctor, evidently somewhat disconcerted. Turning again to the lady, he added in his usual courteous way, "Again pardon me, Madam, but I think Mrs. Alston will soon recover. She will not need my services. I will go at once."

The evident astonishment shown by the doctor at the intelligence given him, aroused Mrs. Blennerhassett's curiosity and she asked, "Did you ever meet Colonel Burr?"

The gentleman was half uncertain whether it were best to disclose the full extent of his acquaintance with the Colonel. "No, that is, yes, several years ago."

"Would you not like to renew your acquaintance?" asked Mrs. Blennerhassett. "He is with my husband in the library. I will call him." As she said this, she made a movement as though she intended to summon her guest. The doctor raised his hands.

"My dear Madam, not for the world. That is, on no account disturb him. I will go."

"Doctor, your actions speak more than your words. I have no right to be curious about my guests but I can ask you why you do not wish to meet Colonel Burr."

"You are right, Madam, I will explain." He then led the lady to a chair and took one beside her, but this time he laid his hat and cane carefully on the floor. Then he began: "You know Colonel Burr fought a duel?"

The lady was all attention. "With General Hamilton, yes."

"It was my misfortune," said the doctor, "to be the surgeon who was engaged for the possible emergency."

Mrs. Blennerhassett cried out, "Did you see the duel?"

"No," he replied, "only the beginning and the sad end. I shall never forget that final picture. Here, the dying man. There stood Burr." As he said this, with the scene existing once more vividly in his imagination, he pointed out the places occupied by the duellists.

"Afterwards, I heard a strange story from my friend, Judge Van Ness, about a young girl who became acquainted with Burr just before the duel, and who had a quarrel with her lover which ended in a separation."

Mrs. Blennerhassett looked at the doctor, inquiringly. "This duel was not caused by a woman, was it?"

"Bless you, no! Madam. I must explain all. It seems that Colonel Burr had given the young woman some money; for what, I know not; and her lover—"

"Tell me no more!" cried Mrs. Blennerhassett, "tell me no more. I know the sad story too well. I know the young man." Then she said to herself, "Poor Frederic!" A new idea seemed to strike her; turning to the doctor, she asked,

"And the young woman, doctor, should you know her if—"

The door opened a very small space and a pretty face looked in. Mrs. Blennerhassett saw it and called out, "Come in! Come in!" In response, a young girl pushed the door half-way open and stood revealed to the gaze of the occupants of the room. "Excuse this interruption, Mrs. Blennerhassett, but I thought Theodosia might be here."

"She has a letter from her husband, Miss Embleton, and has gone to her room to read it."

"Thank you, Mrs. Blennerhassett," said Kate.

As she left the room, the doctor cried, "And she is here, too?"

"She? What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Blennerhassett.

The doctor paused; then he said: "I must tell you the remainder of my story. I met that young lady one day at Judge Van Ness's house, when I called upon him. I, naturally, being an intimate friend of his and she a stranger, asked who she was, and he told me what had taken place between this young lady and her lover on the day of the duel. I would wager my life that the girl who has just left this room was on that field of death."

Mrs. Blennerhassett rejoined, gravely, "I have no doubt of it, Doctor. I thank you for your confidence, and can imagine our guests do not rouse very pleasant memories in your mind."

"They do not," the doctor replied, "and with your kind permission, I will take my departure."

Mrs. Blennerhassett followed him to the door. "Express to Doctor Johnson my earnest hope for his speedy recovery."

The doctor bowed. "I will with pleasure, Madam. Good morning."

After Mrs. Blennerhassett closed the door, she stood for a moment apparently in a quandary.

"This is a startling situation. The lover, the maiden, and the villain, as Frederic calls him, likely to meet at any moment." She took a few steps in an undecided way, then leaning her hand upon the table, stood and mused. Her own face and form were pictured in the silver surface of a mirror, but she was not thinking of herself. "Now if they can meet in the right way, all may come out happily. Time may have prepared the road for a reconciliation. Frederic still loves her. She is unmarried and seems fancy free. Colonel Burr must use his influence to make these young people happy." She looked up and saw her own reflection in the mirror before her. Such was her sensitive nature that it seemed to her that her words had been overheard by another, and although it was foolish, a bright flush rose to her cheeks, which deepened to a rich red on hearing a footstep behind her. She turned and found herself face to face with Captain Clarke.

"Why, Captain Clarke!" she cried, "just the man of all in the world I wished to see. I have astounding news for you."

Frederic looked at her crimsoned face, then said:

"I have some news for you, perhaps equally astounding. Excuse my inquisitiveness, but have you any guests from the East?"

"Yes," she replied, "A gentleman and—"

Frederic interrupted her, "And his daughter. That gentleman is Colonel Burr. Is that your astounding news?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Blennerhassett, somewhat vexed that Frederic had anticipated her story. "But how did you know? Did you meet Doctor Hosack?"

"Doctor Hosack?" repeated Frederic, "Who is he? I know no such man. But I learned that Mrs. Alston's

husband was at Marietta. He is in search of his wife. I volunteered to come and see if Colonel Burr were here. So much to oblige Mr. Alston. But if Colonel Burr is here, I wish to have a few minutes' conversation with him on my own account."

Mrs. Blennerhassett said prematurely, "If you find out where she is—"

Frederic turned towards her half angrily, "How do you know that I wish to see Colonel Burr about a *she?*"

Mrs. Blennerhassett placed her hand imploringly on his arm. "Be calm, Frederic. Because, my poor boy, Doctor Hosack was the surgeon who was on the field when the duel took place, and he has told me all. You revealed to me the story of your life. Fate has brought you face to face once more."

Frederic did not fully comprehend what his friend had told him, and he cried fiercely, "He shall tell me where she is."

The lady intuitively understood Frederic's incomprehension and her first thought was, "He must see Colonel Burr at once." She turned to Frederic, "And he shall. I will send him to you at once." As she spoke, she quitted the room. When left alone, Frederic could restrain his emotion no longer. He walked excitedly up and down the room, coming in contact with several articles of furniture whose proximity he repulsed as vigorously as he could have done if they had been human beings. As he walked, he spoke: "If she is with him, he shall answer to me. If she has left him and is trying to be an honest woman, I will find her and then,—God knows what I shall do then."

Exhausted with passion, which he had not tried to control, he fell into a chair, at the farther end of the room, which had been placed so that its occupant could see and examine at leisure a group of statuary that

was placed upon a table before it. He was thus partially concealed from view, when Kate entered the drawing room.

"That horrid Theodosia has locked herself in her room and is crying and laughing, at the same time, over his letter. She called through the door that he was coming. I suppose she means her husband. I wonder if I shall ever await the coming of a *he* with such joy?" The room was so quiet that every word was perfectly distinct to Frederic, who gazed at her intently. "There is only one man in the world I would care to meet."

Frederic jumped to his feet and strode rapidly towards her, crying, "Kate! Kate!!"

The girl turned quickly as she heard her name pronounced in such impassioned tones. Was this man who stood before her the only one she cared to meet? He must have been, for, with a glad cry, and his name —Frederic—upon her lips, she threw herself into his arms.

For a moment, the lovers stood motionless and speechless in the gladsomeness of this first moment of reunion. Words seemed unnecessary and the lips of neither moved to frame them. Then, Frederic broke the silence:

"You said, Kate, there was only one man in the world whom you cared to meet. Am I that man?"

She had not looked into his face, but now she glanced up at him, and, as a flush spread over cheek and brow, she confessed,

"I was thinking of you."

Frederic took the girl's hands in his, and, holding her at arm's length, looked into her face with a scrutinizing glance. "And I have been thinking of you for two long years, since you deserted me for a life with him. Had I met you a thousand miles away from him, I would have said I have never ceased to love

you, but when I find you in his company, I can only say—"

Was he going to renew the old conflict? Although the grasp upon them was tight, she withdrew her hands from his and said, with just a touch of her old time spirit,

"You were going to say that you hate me."

"No," rejoined Frederic, quickly, "I hate him, and he shall answer to me for his actions. Mrs. Blennerhassett has gone to bring him here so that I may speak with him."

Kate clasped her hands. "You must not meet him!" she exclaimed.

"It rests with you," he cried, "to prevent our meeting and the consequences which will surely come from it."

"What can I do?" asked Kate, hesitatingly.

Again, Frederic caught her hands in his and drew her towards him. "Come with me, Kate, this very instant. I will make you my wife, for I love you; but you must come now and swear that you will never look upon his face again."

Kate again wrested her hands from the tight grasp which held them, and, drawing herself up, proudly, said, "Desert my benefactor in such a way? A man who has always treated me like a daughter; who gave the poor orphan girl what she never knew before, the blessing of a father's love? Frederic, you ask too much. Only let me say good-bye to him, and I will go."

The young man's hot temper, again fiercely roused by the known proximity of the man he most hated, would not allow him to grant even this slight concession to the woman he professed to love so much. All the vengeful fire in his nature rose at this request. "Not one word, Kate, to him. Hark! They are coming. If he enters this room before we leave it, as

a man of honor, I can do but one thing—demand an explanation, which he will refuse; I shall challenge him, and one of us will die, and end this heart-ache."

Kate's own fiery spirit was stirred. She faced him defiantly, "And you are resolved upon this course?" The look in her eye caused him to lose what little self-control he had possessed up to this moment. Advancing towards her, he cried,

"Before Heaven, I swear I will take no other!"

As he spoke the words, he raised his right hand to give force to his oath. He looked so strong and masterful, as he stood there. "They will surely fight," thought Kate, and a shudder ran through her. He had stated the case plainly. Their meeting must be averted and there was only one way in which it could be done. She must yield; but was it for the sake of the man who loved her with so fierce a passion, or was it as much from regard for him who had been a kind, indulgent father? It made no difference; she must yield. She turned to him and said simply,

"Then come."

Frederic caught her in his arms and clasped her so firmly that she struggled to free herself. "Come! Come!!" she cried, "or we may be too late." She felt the necessity for speedy action excused this short love-making.

"Mine at last!" he cried; he took her hand and they rushed from the room.

As Frederic grasped the handle of the door, preparatory to opening it, on the other side of it, Ransome had just placed his finger upon the latch with the intention of entering the room. As the door was suddenly opened, Ransome relaxed his hold and stepped backwards. So intent were Frederic and Kate upon making a speedy exit, that they did not notice the old servant who, as he looked after them, gave another of his

unctuous chuckles; then he entered the drawing room, saying, as he did so,

"Now ef this wasn't broad daylight, I should 'spect that that was a 'lopement."

Ransome had hardly closed the door before it was opened again and Mrs. Blennerhassett entered, accompanied by Colonel Burr. She looked about the room and, not seeing Frederic, cried,

"Not here! Where can he be?" Then, spying Ransome, she asked, "Ransome, have you seen Mr. Clarke?"

The old servant nodded his head, affirmatively. "I can hardly say I saw him, Missus, he was goin' out so speedy, but I did get a glimpse."

"Gone?" exclaimed Mrs. Blennerhassett, "where did he go and when?"

The old retainer chuckled again and said: "He went through that door, jess now like a shot, with Miss Embleton, and they seemed in a dreffful hurry."

Colonel Burr, who had been an interested listener to this conversation, now turned to his hostess with a smile upon his face: "I think I can explain the situation, Mrs. Blennerhassett. The young man, whose story I have heard from Kate, met the young lady. She has explained matters; he is satisfied, and they have gone to smooth down their feathers before they face us again and say they are going to build a nest of their own. Kate is a splendid girl. I have educated her as if she were my own, and if she loves the young man, he shall have her with my blessing."

"I hope so," answered Mrs. Blennerhassett, "I shall be delighted if the affair turns out so happily."

While Colonel Burr had been expressing his sentiments, Ransome had left the room; as he did so, Mr. Blennerhassett entered in time to hear his wife's closing words. "What is it all about, Margaret?" he asked. As his question fell upon their ears, his listeners

turned towards him; he continued, "I am so full of Colonel Burr's land schemes that I do not exactly know what affair you are talking about."

"Your wife will tell you all about the affair, which is the old, old story; two young and loving hearts, happy only in each other's company. But now I am desirous of talking over our business matters with Mrs. Blennerhassett who, I am confident, is a business woman."

"You are right, Colonel," said Mr. Blennerhassett, "you must tell Margaret for I never engage in any business without her advice."

"And consent," added Mrs. Blennerhassett, with a laugh.

At that moment, Theodosia burst into the room, her face filled with animation; she held an open letter aloft in her right hand. Apparently regardless, for the instant, of the presence of Mr. Blennerhassett and his wife, she ran to her father and threw her arms about his neck. "Father, he is coming," she cried, "he received your letter and is on the way; he says he may arrive before his letter. He will go to Marietta and await a letter or message from you if you have gone beyond." She held the letter up before her father's eyes. "See! what a long letter he has written me."

Burr clasped her slight form tenderly in his arms and pressed a kiss upon her upturned face; then held her at arms' length and said, playfully, "And how did he end it? I wager there is not one word for me, his affectionate father-in-law."

Theodosia cried: "Oh, yes! he says," and she looked at the letter, "kiss for me those who love me, and so I must kiss you."

As Theodosia withdrew herself from her father's embrace, she saw the pleased faces of Mrs. Blennerhassett and her husband. Turning to them, she asked, "Can you forgive me for being so thoughtless?"

felt so happy over my letter; and when I am happy—yes—when I am sad, if my father is near me I always confide in him. In my happiness, I forgot my politeness." Turning to her father, she said, with an assumed air of surprise, "I am greatly shocked, father, that you did not reprove me when I first came into the room." Then, with a merry laugh, she cried, "I am going to look out on the river and see if he is coming," and she ran from the room.

Mrs. Blennerhassett looked after the retreating figure; then, turning to her guest, she said: "What an all-impassioned, sensitive, thrilling creature your daughter is, Colonel Burr."

"Yes," he replied, "she is all brain and heart, Madam, and I sometimes fear that the brain is too active and the heart too loving for the fragile casket in which nature has placed them."

Mr. Blennerhassett, who had not been greatly interested in the scene which had just taken place, now remarked: "Would it not be a good time, Colonel Burr, to explain that land business to my wife?"

"Your husband," said Burr, turning to Mrs. Blennerhassett, "has all the impetuosity of the Celtic race. How different from our Jersey phlegm. It seems born in a Jerseyman to never do to-day what he can just as well put off until to-morrow. That's the reason our citizens live to such an advanced age." His closing remark provoked a hearty laugh in which he joined.

"Well, Colonel," said Blennerhassett, somewhat impatiently, "if you do not tell Margaret to-day, I certainly will do so."

"Perhaps it is better that you should," replied Burr, courteously. "If she agrees with your present opinion, our path will be clear. If she disagrees, then we must combine our forces and convince her by fact and irresistible argument," and with a low bow, he added,

"while you are so engaged, with your kind permission, I will join my daughter."

When Colonel Burr left the room, Mr. Blennerhassett said to his wife, "He is a wonderful man."

"So are you, Harman," his wife rejoined, "or you might be if you would use your talents in a way to let the world see your ability. What does Colonel Burr have in mind?"

"A great scheme, Margaret. Come, let us sit down. A certain Baron Bastrop owns a very large tract of land on the Washita River in the Territory of Louisiana. Colonel Burr wishes me to join him and others in purchasing this land, with two purposes in view; one, to divide the land into estates and sell them, thus realizing an immense fortune between us; the other purpose is to establish a colony of independent and worthy individuals and rear around us a society remarkable for the refinements of civil and social life. What do you think of the idea, Margaret?"

His wife replied, impulsively, "It seems a grand idea, and one in which, if you join him, you will find an opportunity to become what nature intended you should be, a leader and perhaps a ruler of men."

"You have high aims for me, Margaret," he said with a smile. "I am, I will allow, somewhat pleased with the scheme; but I am afraid I should soon wish for the old study, and the library, and my telescope, and 'cello."

His wife replied, "All the pleasures you name and enjoy here you could enjoy there as well as here, and in a larger circle, I should have opportunities that our present isolation denies to me."

Blennerhassett looked into his wife's face. "Are you unhappy here, Margaret?"

"No, Harman, a thousand times no!" she cried, taking her husband's hand in hers. "No woman could be unhappy with such a husband and such a home; but

you would become famous there; here, there are none to appreciate your worth."

"But," he interrogated, "if I were happiest here?"

Mrs. Blennerhassett took the hand which she held in hers, placed it about her neck, and sat close to her husband's side: "Then your wife would say, remain here, for your happiness is hers."

Blennerhassett embraced his wife, "And yours is mine, Margaret; if there is any other place where you would be happier than here, there I will make a home for you."

The great door was suddenly opened. Mingled voices and a merry laugh were heard. Blennerhassett and his wife rose to their feet and stood in an expectant attitude. The door was flung wide open and Theodosia entered leaning upon the arm of a young man, followed closely by her father.

"My husband, Mrs. Blennerhassett, Mr. Blennerhassett," said Theodosia.

"I am glad, Mr. Alston," remarked Mrs. Blennerhassett, "that you find your wife in such good health and spirits. This morning she was so indisposed that I sent to Marietta for a physician."

"Yes, a Doctor Hosack," said Mr. Alston. "I met him on the way. A gentleman named Clarke volunteered this morning to visit Mr. Blennerhassett and see if Colonel Burr were here. Soon after his departure, my impatience overcame me and, learning the road was a good one, I started on my horse, expecting to meet him on his return. Instead, I met the doctor, and asked if I was on the right road; he said he was on his way back from Mrs. Blennerhassett's and that Mrs. Alston was ill, and so I came on here at a swift gallop."

"The road to Marietta is a good one," said Mrs. Blennerhassett. "Many a time have I made the trip

to and fro of an afternoon for business or pleasure. We have half a dozen fine saddle horses. What do you say, Colonel Burr, to a horseback ride to the wilderness at the other end of the island? It will give us a splendid appetite for dinner and complete Mrs. Alston's cure."

Colonel Burr bowed: "I will follow your lead, Madam, to the river's brink."

"I often ride into the river," replied Mrs. Blennerhassett. Burr made another courtly bow: "Then I will follow you to the bottom of the river, if you will but lead."

Mr. Alston inquired if Mr. Blennerhassett would accompany them. "Why, certainly," said Theodosia, "we could not think of deserting our host."

"Don't mind me," exclaimed Blennerhassett, "I never ride horseback. Ransome is always my driver. Besides, I have so much to do in the laboratory that I am in no danger of suffering from *ennui.*"

Mr. Alston said: "As we have no word in the English language for *ennui,* Americans certainly should not suffer from it."

"No," cried Burr, "but a Frenchman said *ennui* in France was synonymous with existence in England, and so the English did not need any such word." Laughing heartily, the little party left the room to make preparations for their ride.

After their departure, Blennerhassett sat for a while with an abstracted look upon his face. Whether his thoughts were pleasant or otherwise could not have been divined from his expression. Whatever they were, they were broken in upon by the sudden entrance of Ransome.

"Massa Blennerhassett!"

Blennerhassett looked up, gazed at Ransome for a moment, and then said, "Yes, Ransome, what do you want?"

"A man wants to see you, Massa Blennerhassett, a sailor man."

"Weli, show him in," said the master, rising as he spoke.

Ransome approached him and, in a low voice, said: "He says he wants to speak to you very private, and no one in the house mus' know he is here an' when he goes."

"Have my wife and the others gone to ride?" Mr. Blennerhassett asked.

"Yes, sah, they have all gone, and Missus took Philander with her to cut down the underbrush."

"The coast is clear then," said Blennerhassett to himself. To Ransome, "Tell him to come in, Ransome."

The servant went to do his bidding. "Who can he be? Some old river boatman who wants assistance, but why so much secrecy and mystery? I will not see him but will send some money to him by Ransome. "Ransome! Ransome!!" he called, in a loud voice, and had hardly ceased when the door opened and Ransome ushered in the old sailor, as he had called him.

"Here, sah, here's the man."

The old sailor looked at Ransome and waved his hand in a way to indicate that his presence was not desired.

Mr. Blennerhassett turned towards the man who was dressed in the costume of a river boatman. He was old and grizzled and had evidently been long in the business. The owner of the great house often had demands made upon him for assistance, for the story of his wealth had been widely spread and, in the minds of the simple country folk, his modest competency had been swelled to a fabulous amount.

"My good man, what can I do for you? How much money do you want?"

The sailor approached Mr. Blennerhassett, with one

finger of his right hand uplifted, and, in a low whisper, asked:

"Say, Cap'n, are we alone? No danger of being rung up for a storm, eh?"

Blennerhassett started back and regarded his visitor with a dignified air. "I cannot imagine any reason for your visit unless for assistance, and no reason whatever for so much precaution, so much mystery. Who are you?"

"In the first place," said the man, "I am not a sailor." As he spoke, he removed the false whiskers which had covered his face, and took off the old grizzled wig. Blennerhassett looked at him in astonishment. The man continued: "In the second place, my name is Graham, John Graham; I am a special agent of the United States government on secret service."

The man s statement of his official position quickly recalled Blennerhassett's scattered senses, and he asked, "What is the nature of that special service?"

The man looked at Blennerhassett and smiled. "I have my suspicions that it will not be necessary for me to explain the nature of my visit here."

Blennerhassett, with a more severe manner than he had before assumed, addressed his visitor. "Your innuendo under certain circumstances might be insulting. As I do not know the nature of your suspicions, nor to what knowledge of mine you so vaguely refer, I will give you an opportunity for further explanation. Be seated, sir."

The man walked towards the farther end of the long room, followed by Blennerhassett who, although unable to understand his visitor's strange actions, yet had sufficient curiosity to wish to know the object of his visit. Graham finally selected a seat upon a divan, the back of which was towards the great door, while Blennerhassett sat in a chair facing him.

"Pardon me, sir," said Graham, leaning back in his luxurious seat, "but we detectives always go upon the supposition that our clue is a good one and our suspicions sure to be proved correct."

"Your last remark is more unsatisfactory than your first," said Blennerhassett; "What have I to do with detectives?"

Graham shrugged his shoulders. "You have a visitor, a certain Mr. Burr."

"My visitor," rejoined Blennerhassett, "is Colonel Aaron Burr, ex-Vice-President of the United States."

"Exactly," said Graham, "there can be no mistake about the man. He is the man; he is the Mr. Burr I mean. Excuse a leading question, but what answer have you given to his request that you join him in his treasonable plot?"

Blennerhassett jumped to his feet and cried, excitedly, "Treasonable plot? Sir, your imagination has run away with your senses. He has mentioned no treasonable plot to me."

Graham said to himself, "I am too early." Then aloud: "Pray be seated, Mr. Blennerhassett. Then he has broached no scheme of conspiracy to you as yet," and he strongly emphasized the last two words.

Blennerhassett again sank into his chair. Then an idea seemed to strike him. He looked at Graham and said, "Where are your proofs that you are what you say you are?"

"That is a question you should have asked in the first place," remarked Graham. "I am prepared to answer your inquiry." He placed a paper in Blennerhassett's hands and, unfolding another, held it up for his inspection. "The document in your hand," he continued, "speaks for itself; and here," as he said this he held the outstretched document close to Blennerhassett's eyes, for it occurred to him that he had heard it said that the gentleman was very nearsighted, "is my com-

mission, signed by Thomas Jefferson, the President of the United States."

Blennerhassett examined the papers carefully, then he said: "They seem to be conclusive. Sir, I am an Irishman by birth, and, as such, I have become used to plots and government emissaries. I had hoped that my adopted country would have no use for these instruments of despotism. I am sorry to learn that the government of a free country is obliged to employ spies to track the footsteps of those with whom it differs politically. Plain talk now, after we have exchanged these mutual compliments, can do no harm. What are your suspicions as regards myself?"

Blennerhassett's remarks did not seem to disturb Graham's equanimity. He replied, "To speak plainly, then, sir, my suspicion is that you are aiding and abetting this Colonel Burr in a scheme calculated to disturb the peace of the country."

Blennerhassett sprang to his feet again and spoke more excitedly than before: "False! sir, false in every respect! I am the last man in the world who would disturb the peace or impair the prosperity of the United States. Weary of political strife in my native land, I have sought, and found, an asylum in America, and I can never violate its tranquillity. I have no doubt your charges against Colonel Burr are as weak as your suspicions of myself have proved to be."

Graham's manner was still unruffled, as he replied,

"And yet, Colonel Burr is known by the government to have come West to ascertain the sentiments of the people of the Western States upon the subject of a separation from the Atlantic States."

"Impossible!" cried Blennerhassett, "the union of these States, cemented by the blood of its patriots, can never be broken at the will of any State that has pledged itself to obey the constitution. It is like a marriage

in the sight of God, which man has no right to put asunder."

While Blennerhassett had been speaking, Graham had quietly resumed and carefully adjusted his disguise. He arose from the divan as he remarked, "True and patriotic words, Mr. Blennerhassett. Would that all Americans thought so and that none would ever think otherwise. Then you have no information to give the government in this matter?"

Blennerhassett answered him spiritedly, "None whatever, sir! Colonel Burr has never mentioned the subject to me; but, if he does, I will answer him as I have you, and, in addition, inform the President of his treason at the earliest moment."

Graham bowed: "The President, sir, shall be informed of your patriotic feelings and intentions. Allow me, sir, to thank you for your courtesy and to—"

"Good morning, sir," said Blennerhassett, with asperity. He pointed towards the door at the farther end of the room, and approached it, closely followed by Graham. Blennerhassett opened the door and said, "You can leave the house through this room. There is a door leading on to the lawn, and you can make your exit without meeting my guests. I hear their voices. They have returned from their ride."

"Thank you, sir, for your foresight," said Graham. He entered the small room quickly and closed the door behind him. Blennerhassett walked towards the other end of the room just in time to meet his wife, Theodosia, Colonel Burr, and Mr. Alston, as they entered.

"No need to ask us, Harman," cried Mrs. Blennerhassett, "yes, we have had a splendid time."

"Your wife is a break-neck rider, Mr. Blennerhassett," remarked Colonel Burr, "and easily distanced me, old soldier that I am."

"She made me think of an English hussar charging the enemy," cried Theodosia.

Mr. Alston turned to Mr. Blennerhassett, "Had the English brought such riders as your wife with them, we should still be subjects of King George."

Mrs. Blennerhassett made a beautiful picture as she stood there, in her becoming riding-costume; the long ostrich plumes fell over the edge of her wide-brimmed hat; her cheeks red with excitement, while she nervously tapped the folds of her habit with her whip. She made a low courtesy, "Your flattery, gentlemen, is highly appreciated. To-morrow we will have a twenty-mile gallop and see if our horsemanship is as reliable as it is brilliant."

"That is so," remarked Burr, "the forced march is oftentimes a greater achievement than the brilliant charge."

"Now," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "we will sit down and discuss Colonel Burr's proposition while the subject is on our minds. Oh, Harman, Colonel Burr has explained his scheme to us all, and we all agree with him that it is a brilliant idea, a realization of the dreams of the poets and the hopes of philosophers."

Colonel Burr saw his opportunity: "Yes, and who knows but that our model State may become the real Utopia in which the true, the beautiful, and the good may govern our relations; that Mr. Blennerhassett may become the conservator of our liberties, with Mr. Alston and myself to aid him, respectively, in the arts of diplomacy and war; that his lovely wife may grace the position of first lady in the land, while my daughter and Kate—where is Kate?—act as her maids of honor."

"You have outlined the picture, my dear Colonel," cried Blennerhassett, with enthusiasm; "I would have a State in which science and art would so absorb our time and interest our minds that politics and diplomacy, intrigue and war, would naturally fall into disfavor and disuse. The duties of life should become pleasures; these pleasures, patriotic duties. A land in which those

above would always endeavor to lift to a higher level those who were below. To secure such a Paradise on earth as that, I would give my labors, my fortune, and my life."

"All this is possible, Mr. Blennerhassett," said Burr; "yes, sure of accomplishment, if you and a few others endowed with wealth and education will be the pioneers. But there must be one who will be the first, then others will follow his lead."

As Burr ceased speaking, Blennerhassett drew himself up to his full height. The subject had been so interesting, that for a moment he seemed transformed; he looked at his auditors and said in clear, ringing tones: "Then I will be that first; if mine the greater risk, then mine the greater joy, if success crowns our efforts! Colonel Burr, you can rely upon the word of Harman Blennerhassett."

Colonel Burr approached Blennerhassett with extended hand, "I do, and will!" he cried. They clasped hands. As these two men, whose lives and fates were to be so closely linked together in the future, sealed their compact, their three witnesses looked on with interest and apprehension.

Once more the great door was thrown back upon its hinges and Kate rushed into the room, closely followed by Frederic. Burr released Blennerhassett's hand and turned to meet his protégé.

"Here's my little girl back again," said he, in his most winning manner," she has made it up with her lover and now she comes for her father's blessing. You have it," he added, as Kate grasped his hands and fell upon her knees at his feet.

"No, no!" cried Kate, springing to her feet again, "not that. He is as bitter against you as ever and called you names that I should not dare to repeat before you."

Frederic sprang forward and grasped Kate's hand.

"For the last time, I ask you, Kate will you forsake that man forever?"

Kate tore her hand from his grasp and rushing to Burr threw herself into his arms. Then, turning to Frederic, she said, proudly,

"This is your answer!"

CHAPTER XIX

"ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS"

A MONTH had passed by and Colonel Burr and his companions were still the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Blennerhassett. The days and evenings had been passed in devising plans and in arguments and speculations connected therewith. The great table in the library was covered with books and papers. Maps had been consulted, authorities referred to, and sheets of paper had been covered with long columns of figures. But, if there were marked indications of a busy time in the library, in other parts of the house, and outside of it, the signs were still more significant.

The big raft had been poled across the stream and was now moored near the little landing. The services of Walters and the negro boy, Bob, were now required in other directions than that of boatmen.

In one of the secluded glades that Burr had noticed in his first jaunt through the island, a little cabin had been erected, and in it one of the new recruits was busily engaged in casting bullets for the muskets and rifles which, securely packed, were hidden in the natural cave, the location of which had been observed by Burr. In some of the outbuildings, Blennerhassett's servants were busily engaged in parching grain and putting it into boxes and barrels for transportation—no one knew whither. Kegs of powder and a number of swords, together with cartridge-belts, bullet-pouches, powder-horns, and other military accoutrements, had arrived upon the island, usually by night, and had been con-

ealed in the capacious storehouses. Blennerhassett had contracted for the building of a flotilla of bateaux. These were to be of quite large size, each capable of carrying sixty men with their provisions and military trappings.

At some of the conferences, Blennerhassett, his wife, and Colonel Burr were present; but the usual procedure was for Colonel Burr to advance his propositions to Mrs. Blennerhassett, by whom they were first considered; then she presented them to her husband who rarely failed to finally coincide with her judgment of what was best to be done.

One day, when the three were together in the library, Blennerhassett looked up and, with an appearance of jocularity which he rarely assumed, propounded the important question, "What shall we call this new domain of ours?"

"Judging from the amount of labor it has required and is likely to call for in the future," said Burr, "I should think Workland would be the best name for it."

"If our plans work out as we have designed them," Blennerhassett remarked, "and everybody is obliged to do his or her part of the work, no drones being allowed in our Utopia, there will be so much time left for recreation and amusement that I think Playland more appropriate."

"The names suggested by you gentlemen," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, "are both good, but there is a much better one." Burr looked at her, inquiringly: "Homeland," she replied, in response to the interrogative glance.

"Capital!" cried Burr, "what nobler title than King of Homeland."

"I think there is one that is nobler," remarked Mrs. Blennerhassett.

"What is it?" asked Burr.

The lady smiled: "Queen of Homeland."

Burr arose and made one of his courtly bows. "My dear Mrs. Blennerhassett, you already possess that title."

"I hope the sword and gun will not be needed in Homeland," said Mr. Blennerhassett.

"Only to repel invaders envious of our happiness and prosperity," remarked Burr. But he was not thinking of a pastoral country full of hard-working but contented farmers. In his mind was a picture of a domain with a throne, and a king, and an army. "Only to repel invaders," fell from his lips again, as he completed his mental picture.

The evenings were devoted to literature, art, and music. The latest books were discussed and recent achievements in painting and sculpture were considered. Then Blennerhassett brought out his violin and 'cello and greatly pleased his listeners with his artistic rendition of music of a high order. Between the musical numbers Mrs. Blennerhassett recited poetical selections, and the gatherings were greatly enjoyed by all.

"Harman," said his wife, one evening, "we must treat our friends here to a session of the Shakespearean Club. I suppose you all like Shakespeare?" she queried, turning to her guests.

"He is the king of poets!" exclaimed Burr.

"I love him best," remarked Theodosia, "because he understood the heart of woman. He may have created wicked ones, but never a vain or a foolish one."

An evening was then fixed upon for the meeting, and Mrs. Blennerhassett sent neatly-worded and handsomely-written invitations to a dozen ladies and gentlemen who lived in Marietta, or in the adjoining country, Doctor Johnson and Doctor Hosack being among the number.

At last the time appointed came, and the guests were all assembled in the drawing-room which was bril-

liantly lighted and beautifully decorated with flowers and vines. Mrs. Blennerhassett was, naturally, the inspiration and guiding spirit of the occasion. Addressing the assemblage, she said:

"Our little club has no constitution or officers. Like the Russian editor who prints a newspaper only when he can get paper and ink and news together at the same time, we meet only when the spirit moves us. We call our little entertainment the Session of the Shakespearean Club. Our motto is—All the World's a Stage."—As she said this, she turned to the company and cried, "Who can finish the quotation?"

Several voices repeated the balance, but Burr's clear-cut, incisive tones were heard above the rest: "All the men and women merely players."

Theodosia looked up with an animated countenance and said: "The words of the melancholy Jacques in—"

But before she could complete her remark Kate called out, "As You Like It," and the whole company burst into laughter.

"If there is no objection," continued Mrs. Blennerhassett, "I will assume my usual role of stage manager." This declaration was received with signs of approbation. "The first selection," said the Mistress of Ceremonies, "will be a scene from the 'Merchant of Venice.' We do not give it intact, but read only certain portions which show its intent and purpose." She then passed the written parts to the readers. "Colonel Burr," she said, "I have cast for Shylock; my husband for Antonio; Doctor Hosack as the Duke, while I will endeavor to render the lines allotted to Portia."

Thus designated, the readers took their places in the centre of the room, while the faces of the auditors evinced very deep interest in the coming dramatic scene.

As Portia delivered the closing words, she closed her

book, and the readers, forming in line, bowed their acknowledgments of the plaudits of the company.

A call was then made for a violin solo by Mr. Blennerhassett, to which request he obligingly responded, adding, for an encore, an exquisite little air upon the 'cello.

The Mistress of Ceremonies again took the floor. "This time," she said, "we will leave the mimic stage entirely to the gentlemen. I will not tell you what play the scene is from, but give you all a chance to recognize and name it. I will only tell you that it is the second scene in the third act of the play. Mrs. Blennerhassett passed one of the written parts to Colonel Burr and the other to her husband. She took her seat beside Theodosia and lovingly placed one of her arms about her. The readers began:

Burr, as Cromwell:

"O, my lord,
Must I then leave you? Must I needs forego
So good, so noble, and so true a master?
Bear witness, all that have not hearts of iron,
With what a sorrow Cromwell leaves his lord.—
The king shall have my service; but my prayers
Forever, and forever, shall be yours."

There was a slight pause; a dozen voices cried out, "Henry the Eighth!"

Blennerhassett, as Wolsey:

Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
In all my miseries; but thou hast forced me
Out of thy honest truth to play the woman.
Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;
And—when I am forgotten, as I shall be;
And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
Of me more must be heard of—say, I taught thee,
Say, Wolsey—that once trod the ways of glory,
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honor—
Found thee a way, out of his wreck, to rise in;
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.

Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by 't?
Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not;
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then, if thou fall'st, O Cromwell,
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr. Serve the king,
And,—Pr'ythee lead me in:
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny: 'tis the king's: my robe,
And my integrity to heaven, is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell,
Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Cromwell:

Good sir, have patience.

Wolsey:

So I have. Farewell
The hopes of court! my hopes in heaven do dwell."

Blennerhassett astonished Burr and the other strangers to this form of entertainment by the earnestness and force with which he delivered the celebrated speech of the great cardinal, and the dramatic truth and power of his reading were greatly appreciated and loudly applauded.

Refreshments were then served. Tea and coffee in dainty little china cups; wines of half a dozen varieties in delicate, fragile glasses; appetizing cakes and fruits of various kinds. Then the conversation ran wild; comments upon the readings and the readers; discussions of the real meaning of this or that line or word of the text. The never to be silenced query, was there really a William Shakespeare, was debated *pro* and *con*. Then the Mistress of Ceremonies rang her little bell and

announced that the entertainment would close with a scene from the tragedy of "Macbeth." Quiet was at once restored and all waited anxiously for what was to be the crowning event of the evening. The Mistress of Ceremonies once more passed around the written books. To Colonel Burr, she assigned the part of Macbeth; to her husband, that of King Duncan; to Mr. Alston, that of Banquo, she assuming the character of Lady Macbeth, while the minor characters enlisted the services of nearly every one in the company with the exception of Theodosia, who firmly but politely refused to take part in the reading.

The scene first represented was the arrival of King Duncan at Macbeth's castle; then followed Macbeth's profuse welcome to his sovereign. Omitting minor matters, the next scene disclosed the plot designed by Lady Macbeth for the fulfilment of which her cowardly-minded and weak-kneed husband was to be the instrument. Next followed the murder scene and the exciting dialogue between the two murderers—one an assassin in thought, the other in deed. The selection from the tragedy closed with the sleep-walking scene which was rendered in a superb manner by Mrs. Blennerhassett who rose to the full requirements of the character. In the course of it, however, a most untoward incident occurred which robbed the talented reader of the climax of her scene, and caused the company to break up in a most unexpected manner.

As Mrs. Blennerhassett, in her role of Lady Macbeth, spoke the line, "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" one of the guests, a young girl, unthinkingly turned to Theodosia, by whose side she was sitting, and said: "She might have expected it; all Scotchmen are full-blooded you know."

From this speech, which was entirely unexpected, Theodosia shrank and gave a shriek of horror which at-

tracted the attention of every person in the room. The readers dropped their books and Burr, Kate, and Mrs. Blennerhassett ran towards the excited young woman who seemed to be suffering from hysteria. The continual references to ambition, blood, and murder, to which she had listened during the evening, had been too much for her sensitive organization, and she had given way under the pressure of her overwrought feelings.

Theodosia was taken at once to her room and professional assistance was rendered by the two physicians who were present.

The next morning a conversation took place between Burr and his son-in-law, at the close of which both had come to the conclusion that it would be best for Theodosia and her boy to return home at once to South Carolina, on which journey, of course, it would be necessary for her husband to accompany her. It was recognized by both of them that although, to the casual observer, these were the piping times of peace, the intuitive knowledge and penetration of Theodosia had discerned behind them the omens of strife.

Soon after the conclusion was arrived at that the Alstons were to return home, Doctor Hosack called to make inquiries in regard to his patient of the previous evening. Upon learning of the intended speedy return to the East, he said that his trip to the West had reached its termination, and he had intended to journey towards his home in New York City in a few days. He remarked to Mr. Alston that if his presence would not be considered obtrusive, he should be glad to accompany their party. Mr. Alston assured him that his presence would be a welcome addition; for, if his wife should have another attack, he would be of invaluable service to them. So the matter was thus arranged.

Mrs. Blennerhassett opposed the return both by argument and entreaty. She said there was no more healthful place in the world than their island home, and that

Mrs. Alston would soon recover from her indisposition. But, as she did not know the real objections to the further stay of Theodosia, she was, of course, unable to combat them understandingly, and both arguments and entreaties were of no avail. She, however, carried her point in one particular. She persisted that it was unkind to leave her alone after she had enjoyed herself so much in the company of members of her own sex,—to deprive her of them both at one fell swoop. She insisted that Kate should remain with her, and, as the young girl had no real home, after a talk with her foster-father, it was decided that she should remain.

Preparations were made during the day for the departure for Marietta where the stage was to be taken at ten o'clock the next morning. Doctor Hosack arrived at the island two hours before that time, for he wished to be sure that his patient was in proper condition to undertake the journey. Burr had learned of the doctor's change in his plans so as to form one of the party. As the doctor entered the drawing-room, Burr rose to greet him, exclaiming,

"Doctor, you have won my lasting gratitude. My daughter's life is dearer to me than my own; but yet, in such a case as this, how powerless is a father's love."

Friendly relations had been re-established between Burr and Doctor Hosack. It was not a remembrance of the duel that had caused the latter to show an indisposition to meet Colonel Burr when he first learned of his presence on Blennerhassett Island, but rather the rumors of what reached his ears regarding the relations supposed to exist between Burr and Miss Embleton. When he learned the true facts of the case and saw that the stories which had been circulated were only part and parcel of that malignity which certain persons had always evinced towards Aaron Burr, his reticence vanished and former friendly relations were resumed.

Another kind offer of assistance was to be made to the little party which was to start upon its travels within a couple of hours. Turning to Burr, Blennerhassett said:

"My man, Ransome, had better go with you to Marietta,—and farther," he continued as he turned to Mr. Alston, "if you desire. If you wish, you can take him home with you. He is a good traveler and we have plenty of servants and to spare."

Burr remarked: "He would be of great service, Alston."

Blennerhassett said quickly, "Then he goes—that is settled."

Mr. Alston was evidently greatly pleased by this act of courtesy on the part of his host. "I will not refuse your great kindness, but I must say more than one word to thank you for your—"

Burr finished the speech: "As I shall remain here after you are gone, I will keep on thanking him. But you and the doctor ought to prepare for your journey at once."

"We will," said Alston, and, taking the doctor's arm, they both left the room.

At this moment, Ransome entered to make some inquiry in regard to the baggage.

"Come here, you rascal!" cried his master.

"Yes, Massa."

"Ransome, I am going to send you away."

"Good Lor' don't, Massa. I'll be a good nigger. Don't send poor Ransome away. How'll you ever shoot birds or catch fish or—"

"If I don't have you to do it for me," laughed Blennerhassett. "I don't know; I think it will be necessary to buy my game."

Burr, who had been looking at a book that lay upon a table near by, at this remark, turned and said quickly:

"Learn to do that, Mr. Blennerhassett, and I will

soon make a politician—no, I mean a statesman of you. The kind marksman sells both game and the credit of shooting it—for cash."

Blennerhassett replied somewhat sternly: "So much the worse then for honest sport—and the country of the politician—I mean statesman."

During this colloquy which, in his present excited condition, was above poor Ransome's comprehension, but which he feared had some connection with his impending fate, he had fallen upon his knees at his master's feet and looked up with an imploring expression upon his face. Blennerhassett's features relaxed as he saw the up-turned visage.

"Get up, Ransome, get up." As he said this, he took his old retainer by the arm and assisted him to his feet. "I am not going to send you to South Carolina because you are a bad nigger, but because you are a good one."

Ransome's face brightened. "Did you say Souf Car'lina, Massa?"

"Yes, South Carolina. You are going home with Mrs. Alston and her husband. Are you sorry you are going?"

Ransome was too politic to express unlimited approval of the idea, so he said: "Sorry for some, 'cause I don't want to leave you and the Missus and the chillern—and glad for some, 'cause my ole, ole, mammy lives down in Souf Car'lina."

"You shall go and see her," cried his master. "Colonel Burr, tell your son-in-law that Ransome is to see his old mother before he returns. Here is money."

Burr advanced with his hand raised deprecatingly. "No, I will pay that, or my son will—no refusal."

Blennerhassett counted out some money from his purse and placed it in Ransome's hand. Burr remarked: "You are as obstinate a man as myself. I

must see if I can be of any service to my daughter." As he said this, he left the room.

On Ransome's face, a broad smile had taken the place of the look of fear that had appeared in it when his master first addressed him. "Bless you Massa, and my ole mammy will bless you, too. Good-bye, Massa."

"Don't stop to say good-bye now, Ransome, but go and get ready for your journey."

As is usual on such occasions, farewells and good-byes and hand-shakings were indulged in to profusion, and hearty and sincere wishes for a safe and prosperous journey were extended to the travelers. The partings between Theodosia and Mrs. Blennerhassett, and Theodosia and her friend Kate, were tender and womanly; but out of regard for Theodosia's nervous condition, the leave-takings were made as short as possible. But there was one final interview yet to come, the length of which was to be determined by herself, and not by her companion. This interview was with her father and took place in the great drawing-room which, as if by common understanding and consent, had been left to them for their sole occupancy about half an hour before the contemplated departure.

"Father," said Theodosia, "I cannot leave you, when our next meeting is so uncertain, without saying something that I have upon my mind. You have told me part of your plans and schemes. To my understanding, they have seemed good and proper, and I have approved them; but you must pardon me, father, if I say that I think you have other designs which you have not confided to me, and which, perhaps, from my point of view, would not commend themselves to my judgment. I do not wish to force your confidence, dear father; in fact, in the condition in which I now am, it were better that you should tell me no more than I already know."

Burr nodded his head. Theodosia continued: "You

remember the other night, father, when I was so overcome?" Here, Burr nodded again. "I cannot explain to you," said his daughter, "how I suffered on that occasion. During that scene from the 'Merchant of Venice,' when you knelt there sharpening the knife upon your shoe, and glaring at poor Mr. Blennerhassett, the reality of the scene so affected me that I could have screamed with horror as I have often done when I have awakened from a nightmare."

Burr smiled but said, tenderly: "I am afraid, my dear Theodosia, that you fell asleep and dreamed part of what you have told me. I am sure I have no designs upon poor Mr. Blennerhassett, as you call him."

"I know what you mean," cried Theodosia. "Of course you have no designs upon his life; I do not mean that; but I know as well as you do that his wife is an ambitious woman, that she listens eagerly to your plans and then as eagerly presents them to her husband. He, poor man, having little mind of his own, follows the road that she marks out for him. I can imagine, although no one has told me, that he is going to invest money in your schemes. Suppose that money is lost? Money, you know, is the next thing to blood, and by some people it is considered to be of even greater value; for they will shed blood to obtain it. You are good friends now, father, but if that money is lost, these same good friends may become your bitter enemies in the future; and God knows you have too many of those to wish to add to their number."

Burr may have winced internally but his face expressed neither approval of, nor resentment for his daughter's plain speaking. But she was not through.

"How I wish, dear father, you would follow the advice given to you, as Cromwell, by Mr. Blennerhassett as Cardinal Wolsey. He charged you to fling away ambition. Would that I could add my words so strongly to those of the great Cardinal that you would fling it

away, dear father, and come home to live with us in South Carolina."

Here Burr evinced the first signs of disapprobation that he had manifested.

"No," he cried, "I do not propose to commit suicide by living near those cursèd rice swamps. They will yet be the death of you and your child."

Theodosia had become greatly excited during the interview, and this reference to the possible death of her child brought on another nervous attack. "Death!" she cried, "Yes, it is always death! Don't you remember in the play the other night where the wicked Macbeth killed the good King Duncan? Don't you remember when Lady Macbeth was trying to remove the signs of blood from her hands that she said who would have thought that the old man had so much blood in him? Then a lady who sat beside me leaned over and said: 'That is because he was a Scotchman, and Scotchmen are always full-blooded.' Oh! father, when she uttered those words you can imagine the picture that came to my mind!"

During this long interview, Burr had uttered but few words, and made but few signs either of assent or disapproval. He seemed to recognize that the nervous condition of his daughter was responsible for her language. He took her gently in his arms and pressed a kiss upon her forehead.

"You will forget all this, my dear one," he said, "when you are back home and you and little Gamp resume your studies. You will hear from me often, and it will not be very long before I shall come to you or send for you to come to me again."

The door opened and Mr. Alston entered, accompanied by little Gamp. The time had come for their departure. Turning to his son-in-law, Burr said:

"Theodosia and I have been discussing Shakespeare. If I were to speak in a manner as much like that of the

great poet as it is possible for me to do, I should say: Take her to her home, Joseph, for in these surroundings she is much affected by idle fancies and fantastic phantoms. Do not take her to the rice swamps, Joseph, for it is to the pestilential miasma which arises therefrom that are due the pains from which she suffers. No, Joseph, take her instead to the high hills where she can breathe the pure air that blows from the tall trees and the higher mountains beyond. There will she learn calm philosophy, and sturdy thought will take the place of boding fancies and vain imaginings." Resuming his ordinary manner, he said: "Cheer up, Theodosia! when next we meet you will find that kind Fate has marked me for her favors, and that I am bending low beneath the blessings showered upon me."

For a few moments at least, this very hopeful, very sanguine man implanted trust and confidence in the bosom of his child. She smiled brightly; her eye was full of fire; her voice betrayed no tones of sorrow or regret; and no one would have thought that the farewell words spoken were for more than a brief period.

Theodosia did not see her father again until he stood before the bar of justice at Richmond on trial for his life, charged with conspiracy and high treason.

CHAPTER XX

AN EAVESDROPPER

PHILANDER, the head man at the stables, had been promoted to Ransome's place. He was a young negro and had not had the opportunity to acquire, either by age or experience, that politic manner which had been so marked a characteristic of the old retainer. Neither did he possess that oily, unctuous chuckle which had usually preceded Ransome's entrance and accompanied his departure from the society of his superiors.

Philander seldom laughed and rarely smiled, his countenance preserving almost uniformly a staid and sober demeanor. This was in marked contrast to his uncertain and often ungrammatical language. He had formed an unjust criterion for determining the social condition of visitors to the island, his judgment being based upon the cut and quality of their clothing. Many a heated debate had taken place at the stables between him and the boys, in which he strongly maintained that a gentleman could always be known by his clothes.

About an hour after the departure of his guests eastward, Mr. Blennerhassett sat in his library contemplating a map of Louisiana which was spread out upon the table before him. A dozen or more pins, their heads capped with red or black sealing-wax, had been stuck in different portions of the map. Mr. Blennerhassett was measuring the distance between these pins with a pair of calipers, and then ascertaining the number of miles represented by resorting to a scale which was printed at the bottom of the map.

While thus engaged, Philander entered the library. "Dar's a pusson out dar who tole me he wants ter see yo'."

"Show the gentleman in," said his master, without looking up from his work.

Philander hesitated. "He ain't no gen'leman, Massa Blennerhassett, he's only a pusson. His clo'es is ole and dirty. I reckon he is only a boatman out of a job."

"Did he give his name?" asked his master, looking up.

"No, sah, he said he'd been here afore. He tole me yo'd know him."

The thought immediately flashed through Blennerhassett's mind that the spy, with whom he had had an interview, had come back again—but for what purpose?

"You may show the person in," he said finally, conforming unthinkingly to Philander's phraseology. "Wait a moment," he cried, before Philander reached the door. "Has Colonel Burr returned to the house?"

"No, sah; he informed me confidenshally that he were goin' to ride half way to Marietta, but he tole me he would be back ter dinnah."

The next question threw Philander off his guard: "Did Colonel Burr give you any money?"

"Yes, sah, a triful."

"How much?" asked his master, sternly.

"A dollar, sah."

"Well, Philander," said Mr. Blennerhassett, "if you take money again from any of my guests for services rendered them, for which services I compensate you in many ways, I shall have a talk with Marmaduke."

"Yes, sah," said Philander, bowing and leaving the room hastily.

"That was foolish in me," soliloquized Blennerhassett, "he will take the money just the same in the future, but he will never own up again to having re-

ceived any. How easy it is for a good man to make other men liars."

As Philander opened the door of the library to admit the new comer, the latter turned to him and said sharply: "My colored friend, don't be too particular about showing me the way——I've been here before." When Philander had closed the door, the visitor spoke, in his natural tone of voice, to Blennerhassett: "Do you recognize me, sir?"

Blennerhassett replied: "I have a good memory, sir, but I did not know until the other day that the government of the United States used detectives in disguise to do its bidding."

"That is because," said Graham, for it was he, "detectives seldom disclose their identity to suspected parties."

Blennerhassett who had remained seated up to this time, arose from his chair and said in an excited manner: "Sir! What do you mean?"

Graham replied, coolly: "But in your case, as you are not a suspected party, I throw off my disguise."

Blennerhassett inquired, his ire still rising, "If I am not a suspected party, why come here at all?"

Graham advanced until he reached the end of the table. Then he raised his right hand, and pointing with his forefinger at Blennerhassett said, dramatically: "Because there is a dark and portentous storm-cloud gathering in the horizon which will burst in the near future and cause sad fatalities within that unsuspecting circle—your home. The government sends me not to suspect you, but to warn you!"

At this point, Blennerhassett's natural politeness asserted itself. He motioned his visitor to a chair not far removed from his own, which he resumed. "Were I really in danger of being innocently drawn into a questionable proceeding, this solicitude of the government would be paternal, friendly, and worthy of my

deepest gratitude. Such not being the case, I have no such feelings of gratitude. I will admit that I have united with Colonel Burr in a plan for colonizing and improving a large tract of country, and Colonel Burr has already paid a Kentucky gentleman forty thousand dollars for it."

Graham now propounded an inquiry: "And what reason does Burr give for buying this land? Is he going to found an empire?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"This is a confession," said Graham to himself; then aloud: "So Burr has spoken of his designs?"

Blennerhassett felt impelled to make some explanation. "Colonel Burr and myself have a design in common; to found an empire of sturdy yeomanry—willing emigrants from oppression in Europe. We shall sell this land in hundred acre lots for farms."

At this, Graham remarked, in a satirical tone: "And you two gentlemen propose to govern this country within a country?"

Blennerhassett replied: "No, not that entirely; we hope to make a million dollars by the scheme."

"And this, you think, is all?" asked Graham, still retaining the satirical tone which he had assumed.

Blennerhassett arose and said in a stern but dignified manner: "It is all—of my plans, of my admissions—and of our interview. Do you know the way out, sir?"

Graham bowed: "Thank you, yes." Then he said to himself, "and the way in again."

As Graham placed his finger upon the door-latch he turned to Blennerhassett: "I can take a hint, sir."

Blennerhassett threw himself into his armchair, apparently weary of the interview, and resumed his consideration of the map before him. As Graham's words fell upon his ear he said, without looking up: "Take it then—and your departure at the same time, sir."

Graham released his hold upon the door-latch. He advanced a few steps towards Blennerhassett. "As you say, sir, but when the President of the United States instructs me, I shall make bold to call on you again. Good morning, sir." The door closed behind him.

Blennerhassett sat for a few moments with his head resting upon his hand, evidently in deep thought. Then he leaned back in his chair and said, reflectively: "Am I mistaken in this man, Burr? I think not. I wish all men were as frank and honorable. No! such a man could not be base—no such loving father could intentionally bring dishonor on such a daughter. This suspicion of Burr and his friends is but part of a system of political and social ostracism. Perhaps President Jefferson, successful as he is, is yet jealous of his defeated rival, and hopes to crush him utterly. If that is his scheme, he will find that a Blennerhassett will not aid him. The true Irish blood always boils when rulers plot against the people!"

In the drawing-room, another interview was taking place, the participants being Mrs. Blennerhassett and Kate.

"What a tender-hearted, loving father Colonel Burr is," remarked Mrs. Blennerhassett. "I was really glad that he decided to accompany his daughter part of the way, at least to Marietta; for I was afraid that she would break down utterly, and be unable to undertake the journey."

"Your husband is tender-hearted, too," rejoined Kate. "He ran out of the house, without his hat, in the hot sun. When he reached the landing, the boat had gone; but he called out at the top of his voice: 'Good-bye, Ransome, remember me to your good old mother.' As we walked back to the house together, he explained to me that he had neglected to say good-bye to Ransome when the party started off."

"When two persons love each other dearly," said the married lady, "both are apt to be tender-hearted."

"I am afraid I am not tender-hearted," remarked Kate. As she said this, she averted her gaze.

"It is because you do not love the right one as dearly as you ought."

"Do you think so, Mrs. Blennerhassett? Did I do wrong in being true to my benefactor?"

"Not wrong in being true to him," said Mrs. Blennerhassett, slowly, evidently considering the subject before speaking, "not wholly right in not being true to both. You are both self-willed and impetuous. The feeling that divides you is unworthy of both of you, and no one would like to see you happy more than your benefactor. You made the scene and he had but one course to pursue. All lovers' quarrels should be duels without seconds—not battles with spectators on the housetops."

Kate rose and looked into her mentor's face. "Thank you, Mrs. Blennerhassett. I wish I could be as happy as you are. I will go to my room and think of your words—and of—

"Frederic?" interrogated Mrs. Blennerhassett.

"And of Theodosia," Kate replied, calmly.

When she was alone, Mrs. Blennerhassett soliloquized: "A proud girl, but, I think, a true and honest one. I will yet bring Frederic and Kate together."

The next moment, she advanced to greet her husband and Colonel Burr who entered arm in arm. The gentlemen stopped, when they reached Mrs. Blennerhassett, and faced each other.

"The confidence you have seen fit to place in me," said Colonel Burr, "is extremely flattering. It seems that there has been, without explanation, a sort of consent between our minds."

The lady was evidently impressed by this statement of the accord existing between her husband and their

honored guest. "I agree with you, Colonel Burr. You are the only one I ever saw who could fully appreciate my husband, and, at the same time, fulfil his exacting ideal of what a friend and companion should be."

Burr bowed low before the beautiful wife of his host: "To hear such commendation is pleasant, but doubly so when your voice and manner show equally that your husband's choice of a friend is not repugnant to yourself."

"Repugnant?" cried Mrs. Blennerhassett. "I am delighted that Harman has found someone who dares to tell him that Blennerhassett Island is not the world."

Her husband rejoined: "I wish all parts of the world were as enjoyable as Blennerhassett Island."

"So do I," said Burr. "So does the lazy oriental prince wish always to be surrounded with effeminate comforts. Such pleasure is merely passive. The pursuit of personal gratification invariably ends in selfishness."

Blennerhassett saw that the argument was against him. "Well, to please you both, for I see you are in league against me, I will acknowledge that I am both lazy and selfish—and that I can live happily and die peacefully in this little Paradise."

"But," cried his wife, "you have a growing family—they will soon demand advantages which others can bestow better than ourselves; and with increasing outgo and a reduced income your fortune will steadily diminish."

"I have no doubt, Mr. Blennerhassett, that your wife states the case just as it is. Pardon me, if I presume when I say I think you are deserving of a higher sphere. Your talents and acquirements seem to have destined you for something more than vegetable life; and since the first hour of our acquaintance I have considered your seclusion as a fraud on society."

"You drew your picture, Margaret, in too dark

colors," said her husband. "We are not poor, nor in danger of becoming so; but the increased expenses you mentioned may swallow the interest and menace the principal. My object in joining Colonel Burr in his land scheme is to increase my private fortune, but to do that will not draw me from my home."

Burr felt that the matter should not be pushed forward too strongly. "Not at first, but if our success equals my anticipations, we shall need your presence; and I know your wife will be filled with pleasure when you are restored to the social and active world."

As Burr had anticipated, the concession made by him caused Blennerhassett to make a more pronounced declaration of his interest in their contemplated undertaking. "For Margaret's sake, and that of our dear children, I will try to conquer my selfish delight in this—my island paradise. Can I do more than ask to be admitted to partnership in any speculation which may present itself to your judgment as worthy to engage my talents?"

"Frankly and nobly spoken, sir," cried Burr. "Let us be seated while I unfold to you both a scheme which has in it the elements of wealth, pleasure, popularity, and it may be, in time, power." When his suggestion had been complied with, Burr continued: "The subject of securing land in the Southwest has been in my mind for years. This purchase from Colonel Charles Lynch of four hundred thousand acres lying between the Sabine and Nachitoches Rivers is my first move towards the realization of my projects. I have paid down five thousand dollars."

Blennerhassett broke in, impetuously: "I will be ready with my part at the time appointed."

At this point, a dramatic situation took place, much better suited to the mimic stage than to the drawing-room of a country gentleman. It had so happened that in taking their seats their backs were turned towards

the door which Blennerhassett had indicated to Graham, at his first interview with him, as offering the readiest mode of egress from the house.

It was a habit of Burr's, when talking to interested listeners, to so place himself as to get a view in profile. He had learned by experience that when you look in people's faces it puts them on their guard, and to their questioner they present as impassive a face as is possible. Burr sat at the right hand of his listeners. They looked directly forward, or into each other's faces, and the thoughts and feelings that affected their minds were quickly mirrored in their countenances; yet neither fancied they were under the keenest observation.

Graham, at a safe distance from the house, could see the interior of the room. His quick eye had discerned their positions, and he imagined that a subject of more than ordinary importance was under consideration. He looked around; none of the servants were in sight. He quickly entered the little room at the back of the great drawing-room and approached the door which opened into it. Fortunately for him, it was ajar. Spies always feel warranted in adopting underhand measures for securing information, and many an important secret has been learned by eavesdropping.

"This land purchase," cried Burr, raising his voice to comport with the magnitude of the subject, "is but a commercial enterprise, but it may lead to a glorious military adventure in which I wish you to engage."

Blennerhassett jumped to his feet and exclaimed, excitedly: "Then I wash my hands of the whole affair, Colonel Burr. I am a citizen of the United States and I will never bear arms except in its defence, obedient to that law that makes it a pleasure for a patriot to sacrifice his life for his native land."

Burr accepted the situation. "Give me your hand!" Blennerhassett drew back. Burr continued: "Rest as-

sured that I will never ask you to raise your hand against others than enemies of our country."

The thought ran through Blennerhassett's mind—perhaps the President is right after all. Then he spoke, hesitatingly: "I do not understand you, Colonel Burr."

"I see you do not, and it is my fault. Let us resume our seats." Assuming a most mysterious air, with marked intensity of speech, Burr said: "I am in position to know some official secrets. Among them, is the probability of a war with Spain." This remark again stimulated Blennerhassett to excited speech:

"If the United States declares war against Spain I am willing to follow you, Colonel Burr, in any legal enterprise for the subjugation of the Spanish dominion in this country—like the treatment of my native land, the relics of an abominable and heartless tyranny."

Burr now perceived that the crucial period had arrived. He must stake all now and win or lose. But he meant to win! "And when I tell you that my plan is to wait until this war cloud is ready to burst—then enlist recruits in the West from among the purchasers of our lands—form a private expedition against Mexico—conquer it with its untold wealth, and then lay the prize at the feet of a grateful country, shall we fail in obtaining our reward? They will not and cannot deprive us of the honest glory that we shall win," Burr continued, vehemently. "Yourself, the governor—I, your trusted friend—your wife, the first lady in the land—my daughter and Kate at her side—can you look on this picture of life, action, heroic, patriotic accomplishment and still think of books and crucibles, of flowers and music? Are there any sweeter sounds than the trumpet's clangor and cannon's roar—when the trumpet shouts freedom to an oppressed people—the cannon secures their liberties? But I am excited. No doubt my words will terrify your wife and disturb her peace

of mind. She may one day wish that I had never entered your happy home."

Mrs. Blennerhassett had been greatly interested in the preceding conversation. She could restrain herself no longer: "Do not forget, Colonel Burr, that my grandfather was a soldier, and that the daughters of England are as brave as her sons. Your words make my blood thrill in my veins, but Harman is as cold as stone."

"Oh no, Margaret, I am excited, but I don't show it by words or looks. I am thinking—and that reminds me that I have been experimenting in my laboratory on a new explosive compound which will render gunpowder useless in warfare. Come to the laboratory, and, while I am experimenting, we can talk over this scheme of yours."

As they arose, Burr remarked, "This scheme of ours."

Mrs. Blennerhassett joined forces, as she usually did, with their guest: "Yes, Harman, this scheme of ours."

"Well," remarked Blennerhassett, "I suppose, as we are in league together, we must call it this scheme of ours."

The trio left the drawing-room and wended their way to the library. This had been their usual place for consultation. If they had never discussed financial and political matters except within its secluded precincts, the portentous clouds referred to by Graham might not have gathered over the Blennerhassett household as quickly as they did. The spy, by eavesdropping, had learned what he most wished to know. He left the house, cautiously, by the side door, as he had on a previous occasion. He peered right and left, but, again, there was no one in sight. He walked down to the water's edge where, concealed beneath some overhanging trees, he found his boat. He got into it, and, plying his oars vigorously, moved swiftly towards the Ohio shore of the river.

CHAPTER XXI

"A DIVIDED DUTY"

WHILE the trio of land speculators and possible political revolutionists were discussing Colonel Burr's Southwestern scheme in the library, and while John Graham was rowing swiftly in the direction of Marietta, Captain Frederic Clarke, attired in the uniform of the Ohio militia, entered the great hall of the Blennerhassett mansion. He threw himself into one of the leathern armchairs.

"I wonder what is going on. I am detailed to await secret orders, and, with my company, have spent the day, so far, on the other side of the river. I could not resist the temptation to try to see Kate once more. I hear that two gentlemen and a lady went to Marietta this morning—one was Burr, the other his son-in-law, and the lady, his daughter. Kate must be alone then. I will do as she says. What can it matter, after all, what I think or say of Colonel Burr? Is it any worse for me to say I do not hate Burr when I do, than it is for me to say I don't love Kate when I do?"

Kate entered the room from the rear door. Frederic was effectually concealed from sight, for the chair in which he sat was of massive proportions, with a back reaching far above his head.

The ears of lovers are wonderfully sensitive; often, they hear, or think they hear, each other's voices when the distance that separates them renders such communication not only improbable, but impossible. Kate seemed to be under the influence of a delusion of this nature.

"Frederic! Frederic!! Why how foolish! I thought I heard his voice. And if I did, what would he think of me if he heard me calling his name—so tenderly?"

Frederic sprang from the great armchair and ran to the lovely girl, the true feelings of whose heart had been so unintentionally disclosed. "He would think just what he does, and always has—that you do love him. He knows and confesses that he loves you, and only a foolish pride and useless resentment have prevented him from saying those words that would remove all differences and bring our hearts together for life."

"And you will say those words and give up that useless resentment?" said Kate, archly. "If you will—do not say too much, for I am not angry now—and when you yield, shall I be less kind, less yielding?" Then she thought, "I wish Mrs. Blennerhassett could hear me."

"I have something more to say and I must say it," remarked Frederic. "Let me say, then, I am still opposed to Colonel Burr, politically. We differ as honest men can without losing our respect for each other. For what he has done for you, and others, as friend and benefactor, I can respect and—"

"And what?" cried Kate, going to him and placing her hands upon his shoulders and looking up into his face.

"And love him! There, it's out at last." Frederic put his arms about the young girl who was overjoyed at this sudden and unexpected turn of affairs.

"This moment of happiness makes up for so many days of misery, so many heartaches—oh, Frederic!" she said, as she buried her face upon his shoulder.

"It carries me back to that beautiful morning," he began.

"Don't! don't speak of that morning, Frederic. Let us begin a new life this day and put away all the bitter past."

"Kate, we will."

For several moments, they stood in perfect content with this long-deferred but now secure happiness. Suddenly, they heard a voice. They quickly released each other, and, turning, faced the man who had spoken. He repeated his inquiry, quickly appreciating the fact that what he had said had not been heard.

"Do I address Captain Clarke?"

"That is my name, sir," replied Frederic. "Your business."

"Is private," replied the man. "For your ear alone —begging the lady's pardon."

"Excuse me a moment," said Frederic.

"Under the circumstances, you are most excusable," the man replied.

Frederic accompanied Kate to the door at the rear of the great hall through which she had entered so short a time before with a seemingly hopeless love in her heart, and through which she now passed with that love in full flower, shedding its sweetness upon her and upon the young man who had won her first and only love.

"You will come to me, Frederic," she asked appealingly, "as soon as your business is attended to?"

"At once."

"And are you sure, Frederic, that you can greet my foster-father kindly and take your wife with his blessing?"

Frederic answered her in decided tones: "No word or act of mine shall ever tend to recall past differences or make new ones between myself and Colonel Burr, your foster-father." Her hand lingered in his for a moment—then she was gone.

He returned to meet the man who was awaiting him. The stranger was dressed in a neatly-fitting suit of blue broadcloth, a semi-military costume. He held a cocked hat in his hand and had every appearance of being a

gentleman. When Frederic stood before him, he said: "Now, sir, I am at your service."

"Have you directions from your superior officer, Colonel Phelps?"

"I have," Frederic replied. "They are to obey such orders as may be given me by a man named—"

"Graham," said the man, "that was the name, was it not?"

"It was."

The man opened a paper and handed it to Frederic. "Are you satisfied that I am the party?"

"I am," Frederic replied, laconically.

"What do you consider would be your duty if I gave you an order to arrest two persons?" inquired Graham.

"My duty as a soldier is to obey orders regardless of personal consequences." Graham nodded his head, approvingly.

"And you will do it?"

Frederic resented this continued questioning, the real purpose of which he could not understand.

"This is useless trifling, sir, and hints at an imputation that any honest man could not but resent."

Graham bowed and said, suavely: "Pardon me, but when a person is selected to carry out the will of the President of the United States, there must be no possible doubt of his fitness."

"The President?" cried Frederic, with a look of astonishment.

Graham had now reached the point at which he had been aiming. "Yes, and this paper empowers you to arrest Aaron Burr for conspiracy and high treason, and Harman Blennerhassett as an accomplice and accessory."

Frederic started back. Like lightning, the misery of the situation flashed upon him. Had Fate decreed that there should forever be a bar between him and the woman he loved? Recovering himself, he cried:

"No! I cannot do it—I will not!"

"Why not?" asked Graham, affecting surprise.

"Because I cannot," cried Frederic, who turned his back rudely on the President's representative.

"What prevents you, a soldier, from doing your duty?" asked Graham with a tinge of sarcasm in his tone.

Frederic turned quickly upon his questioner: "The sacred tie of friendship—spare me this blow, Mr. Graham. Anyone else can serve this as well as I. Mr. and Mrs. Blennerhassett are my dearest friends and as innocent as you or I of such a crime."

Graham's tone of sarcasm deepened: "Is Colonel Burr also one of your esteemed friends?"

Frederic cried, impetuously: "He has been my greatest enemy—" then his tone changed—"but there are reasons—"

"Personal ones?" asked Graham, "I thought an honest soldier spurned such trifles."

"Trifles!" cried Frederic. "Oh, my God! If you only knew."

"Tell me," remarked Graham, sententiously.

"I cannot. It is too sacred a trust."

"Tell me, or do your duty," said Graham, sternly. "Refuse to do the first, and you must serve the writ of arrest. Decide! There is no time to lose. By my orders, which your Colonel even must obey, the men of your command are now landed on Blennerhassett Island. They are secreted, but await your orders. Your answer!"

Frederic replied, proudly, "I will not tell you my reasons."

"Come then," cried Graham, "order your men here and do your duty, or a court martial will bring out your cherished secrets."

Graham turned on his heel and strode towards the door. Then he turned and beckoned to Frederic to

follow him. The latter threw one agonized glance towards the door, where, so short a time before, he had parted from Kate; then he followed Graham out of the room.

Kate, whose heart was full of her new happiness, had sought through the great house for Mrs. Blennerhassett, but she had been unable to find her. She tried the door of the library but it was locked, and she knew that there was nothing then for her to do but to wait until her friend came out of her own accord; so she went back to her own room to think about her lover and to cry a little, womanlike, because her future happiness seemed assured.

The occupants of the library, having finished the present consideration of the momentous subject before them, repaired once more to the great hall.

"I knew I was not mistaken in you, Mr. Blennerhassett," said Burr. "Pardon my presumption, but I have assumed from the first that you would join me. I have done much, in a quiet way, since I have been under your friendly roof."

"You have not had time to do a great deal since you bought the land," said Mr. Blennerhassett.

"Now we shall know the secret of those visits to Marietta," his wife exclaimed.

Burr replied: "Yes, you shall know; it is your right. While you have been making contracts for boats to carry sturdy settlers to our new domain, I have been providing for the military part of the enterprise. I have told you, and it is true, that the muskets and rifles and powder and ball and food, that we have provided, will be needed by our band of pioneers for immediate sustenance, and for protection against the jealous Spaniard or predatory Indian; but you will see now, if you have not realized the fact before, that these concomitants of warfare may be used for aggressive as well as defensive purposes. I have ordered a boat, which

will be a palace, for yourself and Mrs. Blennerhassett. It will have a fireplace and glass windows."

"That will be delightful!" cried Mrs. Blennerhassett. "I always loved the water."

"So do I," remarked her husband, "but I shall miss Ransome when there is any fishing going on."

Burr continued the elucidation of his plans: "As soon as we are established, Alston, who is heart and soul with me, and Theodosia and Gamp will join us. Our boats will hold five hundred men. I shall have no lack of recruits. Our enterprise is to be a peaceful one until the United States declares war against Spain. Then we, and our band of pioneers, will aid the Mexicans to throw off the Spanish yoke. We will form a democratic empire, and enrich ourselves until our wealth shall put to shame the dreams of romance."

Burr's black eyes sparkled with unusual brilliancy. For the moment, he seemed intoxicated with enthusiasm. Mrs. Blennerhassett, with nervous fingers, clutched at her husband's arm, her eyes fixed upon Burr with a look of intense admiration. On the other hand, Blennerhassett appeared somewhat dazed and looked as though he did not fully comprehend the magnitude of Burr's schemes.

Kate looked in the door at the farther end of the room. In a clear sprightly tone, she called out: "Do I intrude?"

Mrs. Blennerhassett looked towards the door and saw the smiling face revealed there. "Not at all—come in—you can join our little plot."

Kate approached her friends with quick steps: "Are you all plotting against me? I came to ask advice from friends—not to encounter enemies."

The illusion was dispelled, and Burr and Blennerhassett were once more in a world of realities. "My dear Kate," said Burr, "I hope you will never meet worse enemies than we are."

"I know I can never find truer friends."

Blennerhassett seemed slowly to grasp the situation. "Ah! I understand. I imagined—of course I didn't—I imagined that I saw the Captain from my laboratory window. That was when I burned my finger with the sealing-wax, my dear."

"I will tell the truth," cried Kate, and, as she spoke, a deep flush suffused her cheeks and brow. "He was here and he said—"

"What!" cried Burr, "again? That makes the third time he has proposed."

"But it was the first time he ever told me that no word or act of his would ever tend to recall past differences or make new ones between himself and Colonel Burr. There, I think I have said it almost word for word."

Mrs. Blennerhassett caught the blushing girl in her arms and kissed her repeatedly. "Let me congratulate you, Kate. Frederic is a noble fellow."

"So he is," said Blennerhassett, now thoroughly interested. "We will have a big wedding here and close with a dance; and then the guests can row home by moonlight on the river."

"Won't it be lovely?" cried Kate, with delight. "Why, there is Frederic now."

Frederic entered the room, but stopped when he had taken a few steps forward. Mr. and Mrs. Blennerhassett and Colonel Burr approached him and extended their congratulations. He refused their outstretched hands and turned his face away from Kate's eager gaze. All looked at him, astonishment depicted upon their countenances. There was a look upon Frederic's face which none of those who saw it could understand. They stood expectant; it was for him to explain.

Finally, he said, with apparent difficulty of utterance: "Ladies and gentlemen, this is the saddest mo-

ment of my life, when it should be the happiest. I have a most disagreeable duty to perform."

Kate approached him, her hands outstretched: "Are you going to take back your promise?"

Frederic drew a document from within the breast of his coat and slowly unfolded it. "By this warrant I am directed by the Governor of Ohio to arrest Aaron Burr for conspiracy and high treason, and Harman Blennerhassett as an accessory."

Kate gave a loud shriek and fell prostrate at her lover's feet. Blennerhassett stood irresolute. He did not seem to comprehend the full meaning of the words that he had just heard. Mrs. Blennerhassett calmly regarded the stolid face of her husband. Burr looked at Clarke and a grim smile played over his face. Then he spoke:

"It seems I am to be blessed with a most dutiful and respectful son-in-law."

From Kate, there came a low cry of despair. Burr stepped quickly forward. "Forgive me, Kate, I was unthinking." He lifted her to her feet and supported her tenderly.

"Frederic!" she cried, "this must not be! How could you? Why did you not warn me so he could escape?"

There was a withering sarcasm in Burr's next words: "His plans were well laid, but they will miscarry. He was willing to play the hypocrite, Kate, to gain your hand, when he knew that in a short time he would disgrace your foster-father in your eyes."

"You wrong me greatly, Colonel Burr," said Frederic. "The Blennerhassetts have been my dearest friends."

"Have been?" said Burr, in a tone full of irony, "well qualified! You say your document emanates from the Governor of Ohio. This island lies within the jurisdiction of Virginia."

Frederic answered this remark in a sullen, defiant tone: "The warrant is issued at the President's request. He is not likely to have made such a grave mistake."

"Why not?" asked Burr. "It is not necessary for the President of the United States to be a scholar. Proceed, young man, to serve your warrant; but, first consider the consequences to yourself."

Frederic spoke in a decided tone: "I shall perform my duty as a soldier, whatever may befall me. You must both go with me to Marietta."

"And if I refuse?" cried Burr. "If I resist this base and unexampled violation of the sanctity of a happy home? If I repel the accusation against Mr. Blennerhassett and myself with the scorn and contempt it deserves—are you the man to be the tool of a political conspiracy to wreak vengeance upon a rival—defeated, but yet so strong as to be feared?"

Frederic unsheathed his sword: "Resistance will avail you nothing."

At that moment, Graham entered and took a position by the side of Frederic; Burr and Blennerhassett looked at the newcomer, but with varying emotions. Despite the removal of his disguise, Burr had recognized him.

"Ah!" he cried, "I recognize in this emissary of the President my former boatman, James Gray—who could not swim! I can excuse you now for your lack of feeling when my little grandson was struggling in the water. The duties of a spy naturally render him deaf to the wants of suffering humanity."

Frederic looked at Burr and then at Blennerhassett. "I hope and pray to Heaven that the innocence of you both will be made as clear as the sun, but it is to the people of America it must be proven, not to me."

"Captain Clarke," said Graham, "time presses. If

you have not the courage to do your duty I will call in a squad of soldiers to aid you."

Despite the gravity of the situation which so closely affected him, for a moment Burr's thoughts were turned towards the young man standing thus between two fires, and in his heart, for he was not a revengeful man, he truly pitied him. Then a scene passed before his eyes. Before the Duke stood Desdemona, her father, and Othello; then, he seemed to hear the words that fell from her lips: "I do perceive here a divided duty."

Mrs. Blennerhassett, who had remained silent up to the present time, now spoke with a voice full of indignation: "And you have deemed it necessary to bring a guard to assist you? Captain Clarke, you are a coward!"

Kate cried: "This must be a dream, Frederic, a horrid dream!"

Burr turned to Graham: "Mr. Spy, excuse me, for I know you by no other name—I will go with you and convict my accusers of conspiracy and perjury."

"You speak to me as though I were the criminal," retorted Graham.

Burr rejoined: "A man who is guilty of inhumanity is capable of a crime."

"You know what the law is," said Graham doggedly.

"Yes," cried Burr, "the law is whatever is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained. Now it is on your side, but you shall not take this innocent man from his home." As he said this, he pointed to Blennerhassett. "If you should ever need him it will not be necessary to bring a regiment of soldiers. If I am found guilty, it will not prove that Mr. Blennerhassett is also. If I am found not guilty, Mr. Blennerhassett surely cannot be guilty." He continued: "Mr. Spy, I am your prisoner. I must deny Captain Clarke the pleasure of tak-

ing me into custody. I deny his authority, but I bow to the will of His Majesty, the President!"

Graham went to the great door. Burr followed him. Then he turned and said, in his most winning manner: "Friends, *au revoir,* I will take dinner with you to-morrow." A low bow, and the door closed after him.

Frederic seemed to feel that the assumption of authority by Graham, and Colonel Burr's refusal to submit to arrest at his hands, had, to a great extent if not wholly, extricated him from the dilemma in which he had been placed. He turned towards Kate and extended his hand. With a cry of repulsion, she shrank from him and took refuge by the side of Mrs. Blennerhassett; then all the fierceness of her temper and the heat of her indignation showed themselves. Looking at Frederic with an angry gleam in her eyes, and the cut beneath her lip showing a livid red, she cried:

"Frederic Clarke, I hate you! More than that, I despise you! I will never marry you while my foster-father lives!" With an agonized cry, she buried her face upon Mrs. Blennerhassett's bosom, and was quickly encircled by loving arms.

When Frederic reached the lawn, before the house, he stopped to think. He recalled how he had been placed by the hand of Fate between duty and love. He had failed to perform the one and had lost the other.

The afternoon of that dreadful day wore slowly away. A short time after the departure of Colonel Burr, the spirit of the good housewife rose triumphant, and Mrs. Blennerhassett went to attend to her household duties. Mr. Blennerhassett remembered that he had not completed a certain chemical experiment in his laboratory, and was soon intent over it. Kate asked if she could accompany him, for she did not dare to be left alone with her sorrow which, it seemed to her, was greater than she could bear.

At five o'clock in the afternoon, Mrs. Blennerhassett

rushed into the laboratory with an affrighted look upon her face. "Oh! Harman," she cried, "and you, Kate, go up-stairs and get the children and run as fast as you can with them down to Colonel Burr's raft. It is no use to go to the boat-landing, the soldiers are there."

"Why, what's the matter?" exclaimed Kate. Blennerhassett seemed stupefied.

"Only four soldiers went with Colonel Burr," said Mrs. Blennerhassett. "The remainder were left on the island. They broke into the storehouse and took whatever suited their fancy. They ate up what they could and wantonly destroyed the rest. That would not have been so bad, but they broke into the wine-vault and are fighting for the possession of the liquor with the fury of demons. We must not remain here any longer. Oh! Kate, do what you can to help me. I will get some clothing for ourselves and the children. We must fly at once!"

Kate grasped Mr. Blennerhassett by the arm and they soon reached the nursery, while Mrs. Blennerhassett went to complete the task which she had laid out for herself. In less than half an hour, Blennerhassett, his wife, Kate, and the three little boys were on the raft which had brought Colonel Burr and his companions to the Island Beautiful. The faithful Walters was at his post. Bob was sent to find Philander and Marmaduke, and they joined the little party on the raft.

Within the great mansion, one would have thought the terrors of the French Revolution were being enacted again. The drunken soldiers entirely ignored the restraint of their officers, if any had been exercised, and acted like fiends incarnate. The furniture in the great hall was overturned and the leathern seats slashed with bayonets. In the drawing-room, the pictures were torn from the walls and their destroyers danced upon the broken fragments. Musket, rifle, and pistol shots demolished the beautiful mirrors, the statues and the

articles of vertu with which the room was filled. The cabinet of curiosities was lifted by four sturdy soldiers, and with a shout of drunken glee, hurled through the window-panes. The curtains and lambrequins were pulled down by ruthless hands and thrown into the centre of the room. Upon them were piled the broken fragments of the beautiful furniture which had adorned the room. Then the destroyers invaded the library. Books of almost priceless value were pushed from the shelves with bayonets and thrown in a promiscuous pile upon the floor. In the laboratory, the unthinking desecrators grasped bottles of chemicals and smashed them upon the stone floor of the room. To this act was due the final work of destruction. Explosion followed explosion and the seething flames drove the uneducated ruffians from the room. They made no effort to restrain the progress of the fire. It invaded the library and found new fuel in the immense pile of books, maps, and papers which it contained. Gaining headway, it penetrated the once beautiful drawing-room. It took but a short time for the flames to mount to the ceiling and then upward to the second story. The blinding smoke and the heat drove the brutalized soldiers from the mansion. They gathered upon the lawn, and there, as a fitting finale to their drunken orgie, they attempted to dance, while showers of sparks and blazing embers blown by the stiff breeze, fell about them.

The feelings of the homeless party upon the little raft in the river can only be imagined. Great clouds of black smoke rose from the burning pile, followed by massive shoots of flame which filled the now darkened sky with a lurid light and made the Ohio look like a river of blood.

There was no choice, now. The only course left them was to follow the fortunes of the leader of the enterprise, by which they had lost so much, but in which they had so earnestly joined. Burr had told them

that when he left the island he would proceed to Frankfort, and thither they decided to make their way. Behind them, lay their palace in flames, soon to be but a mass of blackened ruins. Before them, was the Promised Land with hopes of greater power, honor, and riches than they had lost.

The signal was given to the boatmen to cast off, and the raft moved slowly down the river. The shouts and songs of the drunken soldiers still reached their ears. As they neared the western end of the island, a loud crash was heard and a volume of sparks and burning embers shot upward towards the sky. This was the last farewell of Harman Blennerhassett and his wife, Margaret, to their once beautiful home, for Fate had decreed that they should never see it again.

Some years later, Nature, in one of her wrathful moods, sent down upon the Island Beautiful a waste of waters which swept away forever every vestige of the artificial graces that the hand of man had added to the original charms with which the hand of God had beautified it in its primeval state.

CHAPTER XXII

GUARDED BY THE GREAT SPIRIT

GRAHAM, after arresting Colonel Burr, delivered him to Colonel Phelps who took him to Marietta for trial. The whole affair was a farce; for, if an indictment had been granted, no jury could have been found to convict him. Burr was released and he proceeded to Frankfort. Here he was again arrested at the instigation of two noted political opponents. This second trial also proved to be a comedy. Among his defenders was Henry Clay, and in a short time he was once more a free man.

Then he pressed on to Natchez which had been fixed upon as the rendezvous for the flotilla of bateaux which was to leave Blennerhassett Island laden to the water's edge with provisions, munitions of war, and his army of recruits.

Wilkinson heard of the on-coming of the northern invaders. The time had now come for him to save himself as Jefferson had known he would when it became necessary. Making changes in a cipher letter that he had received from Burr so as to have it contain positive evidence of contemplated treason on Burr's part, he forwarded it, together with other incriminating papers and statements, to the President. The latter understood. He had won! His feared and hated rival was now completely in his power. He issued a proclamation in which he stated that certain persons were engaged in a seditious and treasonable undertaking. He used no names, but those who read saw the name of

Burr stand out as plainly as did the writing on the wall at the Babylonish feast. The President called upon the civil and military officers of the United States to arrest the conspirators, and upon the good citizens of all parties to sustain the administration in this hour of peril. The Governor of Mississippi Territory was not so mealy-mouthed, for he offered a reward of two thousand dollars for the arrest of Aaron Burr.

In the meantime, Wilkinson had not been idle. He informed the Spanish military commander in Texas of the projected invasion and assured him that the American army would stand side by side with that of Spain to repel the invaders.

In New Orleans, he was loud in his protestations of loyalty to the American flag and in condemnation of Burr and his associates. Look upon this picture of the man Wilkinson! He proved false to his friends in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. He proved false to the King of Spain whose bribes he had taken. He proved false to his own country in so far as he had been in any way true to those whom he finally deceived. Not satisfied with his triple treachery, he proved false to his brother officer, thus completing the quadrangle of infamy. The fair-faced friend became a foul-hearted foe.

Warned by friends in the city of New Orleans of the President's proclamation and of the attitude taken by General Wilkinson, Burr recognized the fact that to proceed farther South would surely result in his arrest. He learned, too, that a price was set upon his head, and he knew that the friends of Hamilton and the friends of Jefferson would use all the power they possessed to secure his conviction for high treason. He realized that the chances were against him; that he would probably be captured and taken North for trial; nevertheless, he determined to make an attempt to reach the Atlantic coast, and, if possible, escape to Europe.

Having taken the position that he had towards Spain,

he could not count upon finding a refuge in Mexico, in Cuba, or any other of the West Indies. He told his followers, some sixty in number, of the failure of the expedition. At his request, followed later by his absolute command, they manned their boats and began rowing up stream having first sunk their arms and munitions of war to the bottom of the Mississippi. It was their intention to land at some point in Tennessee or Kentucky and disperse to their homes.

Burr had secured for himself a sturdy young horse. He had a pair of pistols in his holsters and a supply of ammunition. He filled a bag with provisions and fastened a couple of blankets to his saddle. Then he mounted, bade farewell to his comrades, and turned his face towards the East. He knew the hardships and trials that he must undergo before he could reach South Carolina, and the few friends that he had left in the world upon whose assistance he could count; but he was a man, despite his small stature, of great physical strength; inured to hardship and privation, of indomitable courage, to whom the word fear was unknown.

He had started upon the trip early in the morning; about noon, he stopped and made a frugal repast beside a small brook. With his abstemious habits, he knew that his supply of food would last him for many days, and he had no fear but that his horse, if left to himself, would find the means of subsistence. Coming to a little glade in the forest, as the sun was sinking low in the West, he determined to spend his first night there. He tethered his horse, built a fire, and then prepared his supper. He had filled his canteen with water from the brook, and his simple wants were soon supplied.

Then he sat down upon the trunk of a tree that had been thrown to the ground in some great storm, filled his pipe, lighted it, and began to think. However impassive and hard to understand Colonel Burr may have been to other people, he was a man who had no se-

crets from himself; he was not afraid of self-introspection. He had now reached the meridian of life. The night was still. Never had man a better opportunity to look back upon the events of a busy life and decide, in his own mind, whether the course that he had followed up to that time should be pursued, or whether he should make a sharp turn and follow a new and untraveled road.

As he looked up at the blue empyrean, studded with stars, two seemed to be familiar to him. Perhaps those two stars were the ones that controlled his life, he thought. He did not know their astronomical names but, in his mind, he felt, personally, that they should be called Pride and Ambition. Why had he quarreled with Washington? Why had he left the staff of the commander-in-chief when the way to glory seemed open to him? Some one, he felt at the time, must have poisoned the mind of the General against him. He did not then know who it was; he had found out since, and to his mind's eye came a picture of that July morning on the Heights at Weehawken; that account had been settled! But why had he not asked Washington the cause of his reserve and distrust, and, when he had learned the cause, why had he not endeavored to explain the matter? Simply because Aaron Burr never explained anything to anybody; his pride would not allow him to do so.

Then he thought of those stirring days when his exertions in the State of New York had brought success to the Democratic-Republican party, and when the electoral votes were counted it was found that Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr had an equal number. Instead of allowing the Federalist party to make a tool of him, instead of allowing his opponents among the Democratic-Republicans to accuse him of being a traitor to his own party, why had he not come out boldly and declared in unmistakable terms that he had

no ambition to be president at that time? Simply because his pride would not allow him to explain, and because he was ambitious to be president even if Thomas Jefferson were obliged to take second place.

Then his mind wandered again to the field at Weehawken. Had he done the best thing for himself in killing Hamilton? No! assuredly the worst thing possible for himself; but why had he not published the confession of Hamilton's confederate, which had come into the possession of Van Ness, and those other papers which would have vindicated his action in the minds of his countrymen? Simply because Aaron Burr's pride would not allow him to explain.

Hamilton had been made a martyr by his pistol-shot, while to him, Burr, had come nothing but obloquy. He might have avoided this if he had made the papers in his possession public; but he had decided that their contents should not be made known for fifty years after his death, so that matter, too, was settled.

Then he realized how he had been cajoled and hoodwinked by Wilkinson. He saw now that Wilkinson had been acting a part which, no doubt, had been suggested to him by the President. It had succeeded only too well. To some of his friends, he had spoken only of his land schemes by which a great amount of money was to be made; to others, he had hinted at the probable action of Kentucky and Tennessee in casting their fate with New Spain rather than with the United States. This he had been prompted to do by Wilkinson who told him it was the only way in which to arouse Congress to action. To others, he had confided the details of the proposed expedition into Texas and Mexico. He informed them, as he had been told by Wilkinson, that at the proper time the President would call upon Congress to declare war against Spain; and then Burr and his followers, aided by the army of the United States, would take possession of this South-

western Territory. He saw how all these speeches, so contrary in their nature, would be used against him; and he realized that the supreme effort of his life would be demanded in order to save that life.

For several days, he kept on his course eastward. On one occasion, after night had fallen upon the forest, having found no satisfactory place in which to rest, he pushed on in the darkness. Suddenly, he entered a clearing in the woods, and, as his horse bounded forward, he was surprised to see a large fire around which were seated some thirty or forty human forms. His quick glance soon discerned that they were Indians. He slipped from his horse and, taking hold of the bridle, walked towards the party.

Several of the braves jumped to their feet and came towards him. He addressed the first in English, but he evidently did not comprehend; then he spoke in French, which one of the party did understand. He learned afterwards that this Indian had originally belonged to one of the Louisiana tribes.

Fortunately for Burr, the meeting upon which he had chanced was a peaceful one; in fact, the Indians were engaged in smoking the pipe of peace when he dashed into the clearing. Walking towards the chief of the party, he saluted him, and then pointed to the pipes. One was passed to him, and, at a sign from the chief, he took a seat beside him and smoked, as the others did.

By means of the French interpreter, he told the chief that he had left the palefaces and desired to cast his fortunes in future with the red men. On the morrow, he wished the braves might be called in council, and he would tell them strange stories of what was going on in the world around them, of which they knew nothing.

"When I speak to you," he said, "let me speak as one of you. Give me one of your costumes, and you

will see that when I talk to Indians that I talk like an Indian and act like one."

His horse was taken away by one of the braves to be cared for. Burr was shown to a wigwam which was placed at his disposal. He was supplied with food, and later the complete costume of a Creek chief was brought to him.

Despite his peculiar position, this wonderful man slept quietly through the night, and when he awoke in the morning, he donned his Indian garb. The council was called at mid-noon, and at about ten o'clock Aaron Burr, in the dress of a Creek chief, stepped into the centre of the council, and thus addressed the meeting:

"Friends and Brothers: I come from the North. Not satisfied with driving your brothers a thousand miles from the seacoast, your enemies have now turned their eyes towards the South and are preparing to drive you into the Gulf. There are thousands of them armed with deadly rifles. They wish for your land, and, in order to possess it, they wish for your lives. I am sick of this work of bloodshed and slaughter. I will take no more part in it. I have come to warn you. I have come to tell you that it is useless for you to resist them. But I come to tell you that I know of a land, far away," and he pointed to the Southwest, "where, if you will follow me, the white man will not follow you. There we can live in peace and plenty for years to come. There your children may be born and grow to manhood, and your fathers and mothers and grandsires may die and be buried in peace."

He took his seat, and for a long time not a word was said. Then one of the chiefs arose and spoke:

"We have heard the words of our white brother. We know that what he tells us is true. We know that these lands that belonged to our fathers and which became ours after them must pass from our hands. We know that we shall be driven into the Gulf or find

graves in the land where we have lived so long. But the Creeks are not cowards! If we should go with you to that land where some of our brothers went years ago, it would be said that we were cowards and that we did not dare to stay and fight. That we ran away at the approach of the white man. Where are our brothers that went to that far-off country years ago? We have never heard from them. They are dead. Our fate would be the same. No! The Creeks will remain. They will fight to the last! It shall never be said that the Creeks were cowards and were not brave enough to stay and fight for their native land."

Grunts of approval came from the chiefs who were gathered at the council. Burr arose and made one more appeal for them to follow him, but he soon saw that his efforts were useless.

He was attended to the door of his wigwam, which he entered. The clothes which he had worn had been taken away. What was to be done next? Should he continue his travels dressed as a Creek Indian? Such a course would be even more dangerous than to proceed in that of a river boatman which he had worn since he left Natchez.

But the Indians solved this question for him. Food was brought at noon and night. After darkness fell, an Indian entered and laid a bundle down before him. He knew it contained the clothes that he had worn when he entered the camp. Taking off the costume of the Creek warrior, he resumed his former disguise. Then he heard a sound outside. On looking out he found that his horse, saddled and bridled, stood by the opening. Burr understood. He left the wigwam, mounted his horse, and, without a word, pushed into the forest in the darkness of the night.

As he rode on, a grim smile played over his features. How was it that he had escaped death at their hands? How was it that they had failed to have sport with

him by tying him to a tree or post as a victim and inflicting upon him all sorts of torture? He well knew. His actions and that speech had saved his life. The Indians had thought that he was insane and no Indian would raise a hand against a man thus afflicted. To their untutored minds a person bereft of reason, who cannot look out for himself, is expressly guarded by the Great Spirit.

CHAPTER XXIII

BETWEEN THE MILLSTONES

IT will seem strange that so few of Burr's expected followers joined him at the appointed rendezvous. A glance at the history of the time supplies an undeniable solution of the situation. The President's proclamation had been issued just in the nick of time. It struck the western malcontents at that desperate point of uncertainty which just precedes positive action. Had it been issued a month later, twenty thousand followers would have flocked to Burr's standard, and the conspiracy, or rebellion, would have been recorded in history as a revolution.

Those who had been loudest in their denunciations of Congress were now dumb as oysters. Those who had vaunted their ability to bring down a Spaniard at long range were conspicuous for the zeal with which they followed the plough or wielded the hoe. In hundreds of homes, the brightly-burnished musket or rifle, together with bullet-pouch and powder-horn, had stood ready to be clutched when the signal for the advance was heard. After the tenor of the proclamation became known, the unloaded weapon hung peacefully over the mantelpiece, or was relegated to a dark corner of the attic. If the Rubicon had been passed, all these men would have been warriors, for the issue would have been success or failure, life or death. No, these were the piping times of peace and only conspirators and traitors bore arms unlawfully.

The country was startled. Loyalty and patriotism

sprang up. To all, without distinction of party, the whole affair seemed plain. Aaron Burr, the disappointed politician, who had tried to defeat Jefferson at his first election, and who had hoped to secure the highest place in the gift of the people by virtue of his position as Governor of New York; who had killed Hamilton because the latter had worked successfully to defeat his aspirations; who had conspired to keep Kentucky and Tennessee from joining the Union; this filibuster, at the head of armed followers, now intended to take possession of Louisiana and the mouth of the Mississippi; next to conquer Texas and Mexico and make himself the head of a new empire. How natural and probable all this seemed to the people in those days. Yet, it must be remembered that the Federalists, of whom Hamilton was the great exponent, were opposed to the United States extending westward. On the other hand, the Democratic-Republican party, of which Jefferson was the head, believed that the "star of empire" should take its way westward, and that the United States should reach to the eastern border of the Mississippi at least. To timid men, it seemed probable that after the arch-traitor Burr had conquered the Southwestern Territory, that he would have designs upon the country bordering upon the western bank of the Mississippi River. As Napoleon Bonaparte was the terror of Europe, so Aaron Burr became the terror of America. As English mothers used to frighten their children by telling them that Bonaparte was coming, it is not improbable that some American mothers influenced their offspring with tales of the great traitor and conspirator, Aaron Burr. He was the man on horseback, ready and willing to ride into power over the rights of the American Republic, which, by years of battle, thousands of lives, and millions of treasure, had been made free. Here was a man who menaced their liberties and whom it was their duty to

remove from their path so that he could do their common country no further injury. It is not to be wondered at that all patriotic citizens looked to Jefferson to free them from this ogre, this spectre! Thus it happened that the same man who by his tact and political skill made Jefferson President of the United States, by his unsuccessful scheme rooted the Virginia politician in his seat, and for sixteen years after the expiration of Jefferson's term Virginia was the mother of Presidents.

For several days after his adventure with the Indians, Burr kept on his way. He had to lose some time in allowing his horse to rest, and his supply of provisions had become quite small, but he knew by various signs that he was approaching a more settled region.

One night, he espied a light and judged by its position that it must be in some log-house. He had been advised that when he arrived at a river, which he had recognized, that not far beyond lived a certain Colonel Hinson who was in sympathy with his plans, and it was his purpose to reach this man and remain secreted for a few days before deciding upon his future course.

Arrived at the little rude cabin, he alighted from his horse and glancing through the window saw two men playing a game of checkers. This seemed a peaceful avocation and he knocked at the door. He inquired of the young man who answered the summons, the direction to Colonel Hinson's house. This was given him, and, thanking his informant, he mounted his horse and rode off.

As the young man who had given Burr the information came back into the cabin, his companion said:

"Come, Perkins, sit down and finish the game."

"No," said Perkins, "I have better game on hand. Do you know who that man was who came to the door?"

"Of course, I don't," said the other. "I didn't look at him. Why should I?"

"Well," said Perkins, "that man means two thousand dollars to me; if you'll help me catch him, we'll divide."

"No," replied the other man, "you can have the whole of it. I don't take any stock in your story."

Perkins was not particularly desirous of imparting any more information to his companion. If he had told him that the man who had come to the door was Aaron Burr, for whom a reward of two thousand dollars was offered, he had no doubt his friend would have been willing to accompany him. But Perkins was human, and realized that two thousand was twice as much as one thousand. So, dashing out of the cabin, he started towards the house of the sheriff of the county, which was not far distant from Colonel Hinson's.

To the sheriff he told his story, and, being promised part of the reward if he made the arrest, the sheriff went to the Colonel's house. There he found that a stranger had arrived, had introduced himself to the Colonel, had been made welcome, and was enjoying a good supper before a blazing fire. The sheriff was welcomed by the Colonel and introduced to Burr, who, of course, had given an assumed name.

Burr was at his best that evening. Story followed story; witticism followed witticism, and the Colonel and the sheriff shook their sides with laughter. Although the sheriff had come with the intention of arresting Burr, the idea rapidly vanished from his mind; and when, at half-past eleven, he told the Colonel that he must go home, he made no attempt to interfere with the personal liberty of Colonel Hinson's guest.

On going from the house, the sheriff was met by Perkins who, half-frozen, abused him roundly for his failure to make the arrest. The sheriff resented this

and told him that the man's name was not Burr, and that if Perkins wished to make a fool of himself he had his permission. Perkins, however, knew his man. He had seen those eyes when Burr had presided over the Senate at Washington, and he knew that there was not another man in America with such a pair.

Procuring a horse, he rode to Fort Gaines, and, making his report to the officer in command, a squad of soldiers was sent with him to make the arrest.

Burr, by the advice of Colonel Hinson, had left, early the next morning, on his course eastward; but he was overtaken by the party of soldiers, and, Perkins having sworn that he was Aaron Burr, the fugitive was taken into custody by the United States troops.

Then followed a long, dangerous, and uncomfortable journey northward. It covered several weeks, but finally, Richmond, Va., was reached, and Burr was incarcerated in the penitentiary. The news of his arrest soon spread over the country. A grand jury was at once impaneled to bring in an indictment against him. The celebrated Chief Justice Marshall was to preside at the trial.

A true bill was found and the date for the trial fixed. Burr determined to conduct his case in person, but he called to his aid his great friend, Luther Martin, of Maryland, Mr. Wickham, and Edmund Randolph of Virginia. Counting himself, this made a quartette of legal notables.

The prosecution was conducted by Colonel Hay and Mr. McRae, and to their number was added, later, the celebrated William Wirt, afterwards Attorney-General under President Madison.

It is not necessary to go over any but the most important details of this remarkable trial, the stenographic report of which covered a thousand printed pages. The counsel for the defence, knowing that the whole

power of the administration was to be directed against the prisoner, made a demand for certain papers known to be in the possession of the President. This demand was refused by the Executive, but, after long days of weary and apparently useless arguing, it was finally decided by the Chief Justice that the papers must be produced.

This was a point gained for the defence. Edmund Randolph did not quibble in the speech he made on this occasion. He openly declared that his client was being prosecuted not alone by the judicial power of the government but that the Executive was using all his influence and making every possible endeavor to secure a conviction. William Wirt's celebrated speech, in which he described the arrival of Burr at Blennerhassett Island, and the events which followed, has probably not been equalled in the history of the American bar. But eloquence in a lawyer, although a great possession, after all, is not so convincing as absolute fact. The government tried to prove constructive treason, meaning by this that as Burr had been accompanied by armed followers, it was conclusive proof that if he had come into collision with the forces of the United States that those arms would have been used and such use, of course, would have been considered as high treason under the law; but the defence showed that neither Burr nor his followers had committed any overt act. Two witnesses could not be produced by the government to show that either Burr or his followers had committed any such act against the peace of the government, its property, or its military defenders.

Thus the case fell to the ground, and those who had been indicted with him were acquitted of the charge of high treason.

Then another attempt was made to indict Burr and his associates for misdemeanor; but this, too, signally failed. Prompted by the Executive, the foreman of

the jury brought in a verdict of "Not Proven." This form of verdict had never been allowed in any country with the exception of Scotland. The idea of it is to show that although the jurymen have no doubt in their minds of the guilt of the prisoner, as the fact has not been conclusively proven, they return their verdict in that form. In other words, it attaches a stigma to the accused from which he can never escape. But the clerk of the court knew that neither England nor America recognized any such form of verdict, and, in entering it upon the records of the court, instead of using the words "Not Proven," he recorded "Not Guilty."

Thus, after years of unrest, Aaron Burr found himself once more a free man; free as far as his physical movements were concerned; free as regarded the operations of his own mind; free to go and come without restraint. Surely, he was not enclosed within walls of stone and his escape prevented by bars of iron; but, when he looked about him, he realized that he was still imprisoned; that all about him were thousands of human beings, and that it would have been easier to have cut his way through walls of stone than to reach the hearts of those who surrounded him. There were no iron bars to sever before he could secure his liberty, but the stern faces and repelling looks that met him on every side formed a yet stronger barrier between him and freedom.

It would require the highest order of literary skill to make attractive the recital of the legal proceedings connected with this State trial, but there were many incidents relative thereto which admit of interesting portrayal.

After the commencement of the trial, a revulsion took place in the public mind, especially at the South. The President had expected when Burr was arrested that he would be completely overwhelmed by the odium of treason cast upon him. He knew that the Federal-

ists would look with gratification upon the downfall of the man who had caused the death of their great leader. To those members of the Democratic-Republican party who supported the President, the complete ruin of Aaron Burr was a political necessity. The culmination of the presidential stratagem was to have been the crushing of his hated rival between these upper and nether millstones.

When the period of second-thought came, many men believed, if they did not openly express the opinion, that it was not quite fair to call a man a traitor until he had been proved to be one by due process of law.

No man looked less nor acted less like a traitor than Aaron Burr. He appeared in court dressed in a suit of black velvet; his shirt ruffle was immaculate; his hair brushed back and carefully powdered; his shoe-buckles shone brightly. Throughout the trial, he maintained his notable equanimity and showed a marked civility and graceful courtesy even to his relentless prosecutors.

His rooms in the penitentiary were well furnished by outside contributions. Flowers, fruits, wines, and every conceivable delicacy in the shape of food were sent to him by the ladies of Richmond and from friends afar. Socially, he was still a king. Politically, outside of personal friends, there were " none so poor to do him reverence."

The great legal battle drew interested witnesses from all parts of the country. Winfield Scott, then a young man, but destined to become famous as a general, listened to the testimony, as did the youthful Washington Irving who afterwards made his mark in the world of literature. To some lady friends, the latter wrote that he considered Colonel Burr a much-abused man. General Andrew Jackson and young Zachary Taylor, future Presidents of the United States, stood side by side in the crowded court room.

The non-arrival of General Wilkinson delayed the progress of the trial some three weeks. The President had counted upon his testimony to compass Burr's complete discomfiture. Instead of posing, as the President had anticipated, as the saviour of his country, Wilkinson made a most contemptible spectacle on the witness stand. By adroit cross-examination, he was forced to confess that he corresponded in cipher with Burr. His deepest humiliation came when he was obliged to acknowledge that he had changed one of Burr's letters so as to make it appear treasonable in intent.

In the words of an American historian: "Jefferson made himself the especial champion of Wilkinson, but no explanation could make the latter's course square with honorable dealing, and Wilkinson, the double traitor, the bribe taker, the corrupt servant of a foreign government, remained at the head of the American army."

This southwestern affair has almost universally been called "Burr's Conspiracy" in histories, biographies, school-books, magazines, and newspaper articles; but Burr asserted, General Jackson believed, and books have been written which aimed to prove, that Wilkinson was its originator.

Before the trial began, Theodosia arrived at Richmond accompanied by her husband and little Gamp. She had not seen her father since the affecting parting between them in the drawing-room at Blennerhassett Island. Burr, on seeing him, clasped his little grandson to his breast and called him a hundred endearing names, inquired about his health and his studies, and seemed oblivious to the fact that an iron door had been locked upon them by the jailer.

"But father," said Theodosia, unable to longer restrain her feelings, "how will this terrible affair end?"

"In an acquittal," Burr replied, calmly.

"Be not too confident, dear father," said Theodosia, her eyes filling with tears; "have you not noticed that from the day when you stepped down from the Vice-President's chair, that the hand of Fate has been against you?"

"This time it will be different," said Burr. "They have no case."

"Father," cried Theodosia, throwing her arms about his neck, "you know how much I love you! I reverence you and, may God forgive me, it would take but little more to make me worship you; but, despite all this, I fear, I fear."

Burr disengaged himself from her embrace and fixed those marvellous eyes upon her. "Theodosia," said he, in calm, even tones, "if you can be firm I should be glad to have you stay here with me. If, during the trial, your face is calm and untroubled to look upon, it will give me aid and comfort; but if you cannot be firm and resolute and a credit to my system of instruction, it were better for you to return home and await the result there."

So this little Spartan woman wiped the tears from her eyes, steeled her heart, and never by look or action betrayed her inward thoughts or feelings until the verdict was recorded. Then, with a glad cry, she broke the steel bars that had bound her heart and fell in a swoon upon the floor of the court room.

Kate Embleton, like Theodosia, was in court every day during the long and tedious trial. Little Gamp had been committed to her charge and many times during each day did Burr's eyes turn to look upon the face of his beloved grandson; but those whose minds were evil and whose tongues were scandal-scarred, did not lose this good opportunity to secretly express their opinion that it was the face of the pretty woman and not that of the child that attracted the great conspirator's attention.

While William Wirt was likening Aaron Burr to the serpent that entered the garden of Eden and tempted our Mother Eve, Blennerhassett, the subject of the panegyric, was making entries in his journal and writing letters to friends in direct contradiction to the position assumed by his counsel. His hopes of gaining honor, fame, and fabulous wealth were gone; but he had not given up the hope of getting back, with interest, the money he had invested in the enterprise. Of course, if he had not met Burr, the drunken Ohio militia would never have pillaged his house and set it on fire. But he often afterwards thought, with a shudder, if he had never seen Burr, that his house, his family, and he himself might have been victims of the great flood that came several years later, washing away in its ruthless waste every building from the island.

On the evening of the day when the verdict was rendered, a complimentary dinner was given by Burr to his counsel and some close personal friends who were in Richmond. Felicitations were in order and many were the toasts that were drunk in commemoration of the signal victory won by the accused. Burr and some of his friends retired at a late hour, but at the suggestion of Luther Martin, who was a devotee of the dinner table, and particularly of the wine bottles that graced it, the conviviality was kept up far into the morning hours. Anecdote after anecdote about Burr followed each other in rapid succession. His family, his childhood, his education, his military exploits, his legal successes, his political career, and his social reputation furnished abundant food for comment.

"I heard a story once," said one of the guests, "about an incident that took place at a murder trial. I have always wondered whether it were true or not, but have had a delicacy about asking the Colonel directly."

"I know what you mean," said Martin. "Burr told me about it. Yes, it was actually true."

The great lawyer rose to his feet with difficulty. Like many noted legal luminaries and celebrated statesmen who have flourished before and since his time, Luther Martin never spoke so well as when under the influence of stimulants.

"It was a murder case," he began, "and Burr formed the opinion that the principal witness for the prosecution was the real murderer, and not the person who had been accused. The trial took place on a stormy day in winter and the court room became quite dark. The judge did not wish to adjourn the court until certain evidence had been given and so candles were ordered to be brought in. They were placed in what was considered the most advantageous positions, but cast, of course, only a glimmering light through the large court room. It so happened that by the arrangement, the face of the principal witness for the prosecution was in the shade. He was being cross-examined by Colonel Burr, who was not satisfied because he could not see the face of the witness. He then determined upon a great *coup* which required as much nerve to perform in a crowded court room as would have been demanded to lead a charge of Continental militia against a regiment of British regulars. But Burr thought nothing of this, and he also thought he knew his man. He took two candles from the table at which he had been sitting, and going across the room, faced the witness, holding the candles high in the air so that the light from them fell directly upon his face. He cried in tones which rang through the court room:

"'What you have said is untrue, sir, from first to last, and you know it! I will ask you one more question, but before doing so, I declare in the face of this assemblage and before the judge and jury here sitting, that it is my honest belief that you are the real murderer!'

"Fixing his piercing eyes upon the witness in the dock, he cried, 'Have I spoken the truth?'

"The man thus confronted, and thus boldly accused, lost his self-possession; his nerve gave way, and he fell in a state of collapse in the witness-stand. When he revived, his protestations and exclamations were so confused and contradictory, and in themselves such evidence of his guilt, that he was remanded into custody by the judge and at a later day was proven guilty of the murder and suffered the fate he deserved."

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MEANEST MAN IN AMERICA

THE morning after the complimentary dinner given by Aaron Burr to his counsel, quite a large number of officers connected with the United States army was gathered at one of the leading taverns in the city of Richmond.

The trial of Burr had awakened great interest in military circles. He had both friends and foes in the army, and each class was much interested in the trial and its outcome, and many had obtained furloughs in order that they might visit Richmond. Besides these, there were many old army friends of Burr who had known him during the Revolutionary War, and who were enough interested in him to make the trip.

Among those gathered at the tavern in question was General Andrew Jackson of Tennessee. He had been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of his State and had visited Richmond more from a legal than from a military point of view. He was acquainted with Chief Justice Marshall and wished to witness his conduct of this celebrated case.

The fiery old Tennesseean was seated in the big room of the tavern. Near him sat Zachary Taylor and young Winfield Scott, who, although not yet in the regular army, contemplated a military career. There was also present Colonel Claiborne who, it will be remembered, was attached to that portion of the army under command of General James Wilkinson. It will be noticed by the change in his title that the former Captain Clai-

borne had profited by his military connection with General Wilkinson. He knew himself that he had also profited financially to a great extent. This latter fact was known to many others but, from motives of self-interest or expediency, they kept their knowledge to themselves.

Colonel Claiborne had come to Richmond, in company with General Wilkinson, expecting to be called as a witness to give corroboration to the General's testimony; but, it having come to the ears of the prosecution that if Claiborne were put upon the stand he would be subjected to a very severe cross-examination which might disclose certain facts that would disparage the testimony of their principal witness, Claiborne had been advised to leave the city quietly, which he had done. His appearance at the tavern was the first that had been seen of him since the day before General Wilkinson stepped upon the witness-stand.

As is well known, General Jackson was a strong partisan. He had believed in Burr's plan for driving the hated Spaniard from what seemed destined to become American soil. Besides, he was well acquainted with General Wilkinson's past career and did not believe that the leopard had changed his spots.

Colonel Claiborne had been introduced to General Jackson on his arrival in Richmond, and thought it proper to approach him and utter the usual complimentary remarks which the General prized so much.

"You have been out of town," said General Jackson.

"Yes," replied Colonel Claiborne, "I have been to Washington."

"Did you notice while there," asked Jackson, "that the hitching-post which President Jefferson used on the day he was inaugurated had been cut down and carried away for keepsakes?"

The fact was that Colonel Claiborne had not been in Washington, but had been hiding in a Virginia town

about twenty miles from Richmond. Not suspecting the General's purpose, he replied:.

"Yes, I was told so one day when I was at the Capitol."

The General nodded and a few minutes later Colonel Claiborne was talking to some military friends in another part of the room. Turning to Zachary Taylor, who stood near him, Jackson said, in an undertone:

"What an infernal liar! I was in Washington just before I came to Richmond and the post stood there just the same as ever."

As was common among military men when off duty, stimulants were in active demand, and the conversation waxed louder and louder. A large party was gathered about the chair in which General Jackson sat, listening with interest to his comments upon men and things. One of the party asked Jackson what he thought of General Wilkinson's testimony.

"If I did not know the man," was his reply, "I might have been led to think he was telling the truth, but considering what I know about him, I don't believe he could tell it if he tried."

"I do not think you ought to make such a statement as that, General," said Captain McVea, a North Carolinian, "unless you have strong evidence upon which to base such an opinion."

"You don't, eh?" said the choleric old gentleman, "well, supposing I have the best of evidence upon which to base my opinion, what would you say to that?"

"I should say," replied the Captain, very politely, "that I should like to hear the evidence before accepting the opinion."

"You are a very cautious young man," remarked General Jackson.

"General Wilkinson came of good family," answered

Captain McVea, apparently not noticing Jackson's last words.

"I know he did," the General replied, "and no doubt his mother prayed that he might grow up to be a great and good man and have a successful and honorable career. All good mothers do that. I hope she is not living now, for I am afraid she would be terribly disappointed in her offspring."

"What you have said, General Jackson, is your opinion, but it does not supply the evidence that I should like to hear."

The General looked about the room. Suddenly his face lighted up. "Hardin!" he cried out in his stentorian voice, "come here!"

The man addressed was apparently more than sixty years of age. He had a stern, rugged face which showed that he had borne his share of the troubles and exigencies of frontier life. He approached General Jackson. "Here, Hardin," said the latter, "is a member of the army, Captain McVea, I believe your name is—make you acquainted with Colonel Hardin of Kentucky, my sister State."

A chair was offered to Colonel Hardin and he sat down beside the General. "I have been expressing my opinion rather freely, perhaps, about our mutual acquaintance, General Wilkinson, and this young man thinks I have spoken a little too harshly. Now will you oblige me by telling this company what you know about Jim Wilkinson?"

"I thought," said Hardin, "that that story had grown old and was forgotten, but I suppose some of the younger members of the army have never heard it. To oblige you, General, I will tell the story over again, but I never like to do it. It calls up very unpleasant memories."

Nearly every man in the room had been attracted by General Jackson's loud call for Colonel Hardin, and

all stood expectantly awaiting the story, which, although known to some of the older ones, was new to the greater part of those present. Colonel Hardin spoke in a straightforward, business-like way:

"On the night before the battle of Saratoga, I made a reconnoissance and learned quite accurately the number and position of the enemy. I was on my way to the headquarters of General Gates to give him the particulars I had gained, when I met Wilkinson, who, in company with some brother officers, was returning from a drinking bout. I informed Wilkinson of my discovery, and, being anxious to reach my regiment, asked him to carry the news to General Gates. Wilkinson promised to do this, and he kept his promise; but in his recital he made no mention of me, taking to himself all the credit for the results secured by the reconnoitre."

Here General Jackson could restrain his feelings no longer: "The next day the battle took place and the page of American history which records it is bright with the light of victory. It is shameful that an ignoble act should be so closely connected with an illustrious achievement!"

After this interruption, Colonel Hardin continued his narrative: "General Gates naturally felt greatly indebted to Wilkinson. He chose him to bear his report of the victory to Congress then sitting at York, Pennsylvania. Wilkinson was three weeks making the trip and the news was a week old when he delivered the report. At the same time, he also presented a letter to Congress which Gates had intrusted to him. It contained a recommendation from the General that Wilkinson be made a brigadier-general as well as a suggestion that Congress should further reward him by presenting him with a sword."

Here General Jackson's indignation again got beyond bounds. "If it had been my duty to present the

sword to him, I would have had it made into a corkscrew first." This remark drew forth a hearty laugh from the greater part of the company.

Hardin continued: "The rank of brevet brigadier-general was accorded him, but the resolution relating to the sword was defeated. This adverse action was due to a remark made during the debate by Doctor John Witherspoon. In his broad Scotch accent, he convulsed the house by saying—'I think ye'd better gie the lad a pair of spurs.'"

"You can't fool a Scotchman," cried Jackson, "and it turned out that Wilkinson could not fool his brother officers. News traveled slowly in those days, but Wilkinson's contemptible act was soon noised throughout the country and forty-nine brigadier-generals of the Continental army joined in a protest to Congress against that being allowed to retain a rank so dishonorably accredited. The force of public opinion was too much for Wilkinson and he was obliged to resign his brevet. If my name had been George Washington, I would have had him cashiered and dismissed the service. Excuse me, Colonel," he said, turning to Hardin, "for taking the words out of your mouth, but I could not help it."

"I think you can tell the rest of it, General, much better than I can," said Hardin.

"In spite of all," Jackson went on, "he profited by his acts of meanness. He was made Adjutant-General, then Secretary of the Board of War of which Gates was a member."

"His conduct was surely very reprehensible," remarked Captain McVea, "but the effect of one wrong step may often be retrieved by subsequent good ones."

"My young friend," said Jackson, restraining his rapidly rising wrath, "you evidently do not know much about the career of the man whose cause you are supporting. Instead of doing better, he went from bad

to worse, and he has never stopped in his downward course. Perhaps you do not know that he was connected with the Conway Cabal, the purpose of which was to have Gates supersede Washington; but the rum bottle played him false again, and, while under its influence, he let the cat out of the bag to Lord Stirling, and the scheme, to call it by no worse name, was frustrated." The General now grew eloquent. He was full of his subject and could retain a sitting posture no longer. He arose, and as he did so the company fell back from too close proximity to his outstretched arms. Raising his voice until it could have been heard upon the street by passers-by, he said: "From the time Wilkinson told the cowardly lie by which he sought to deprive my brave brother officer here," pointing to Hardin, "of the credit due him, he seems to have lost all sense of moral discrimination. The voice of his conscience is either silent or dead. From that time, he has seemed to regard the world as his oyster to be opened either by his mendacious tongue or his dishonored sword."

Captain McVea had apparently been much impressed by the statements made by Colonel Hardin and General Jackson, but he did not choose to acknowledge it so publicly. Thinking to change the subject, he asked, somewhat irrelevantly.

"How did he get his appointment in the army?"

"He was appointed by the great and good George Washington," answered General Jackson. "One of the supporters of his application gave as a reason for endorsing him that—when Wilkinson was unemployed he was dangerous to public quiet. But Washington seems to have taken stock in him. He made him a major-general and afterwards appointed him to be commander of the army to succeed that honest old dare-devil soldier, Mad Anthony Wayne. That was going down rather than up. As I said before, Wilkinson prof-

ited more by his treachery than honest men have by bravery. I think he is the meanest man that America has ever produced and God forbid that she should ever turn out another like him. Some one of you gentlemen asked me my opinion, and I have given it. I think he is the meanest man in America, and, if reports are true, those who are intimately associated with him are not much better."

As these words fell from General Jackson's lips, more than half of the company turned and looked directly at Colonel Claiborne, for the fact of his position on General Wilkinson's staff was well known to them. The Colonel had heard the words uttered by General Jackson, but probably would not have noticed them had he not so suddenly become the subject of such close inspection. The color rose in his cheeks and his lips trembled. Pushing his way through the crowd until he stood before Jackson, he said,

"Did I understand your last remark?"

"'Pon honor, I don't know," was the General's reply, "I am not responsible for your understanding."

"Will you kindly repeat it," asked the Colonel, smothering his rising indignation.

"Certainly," answered General Jackson, "I said substantially that Wilkinson was a rascal and many of those who are about him are not much better than he is."

"Did you intend anything personal by that?" asked Colonel Claiborne.

"I can't say," rejoined the General, "if the remark hits you, it must have been intended for you."

"I consider your accusation altogether too sweeping in its nature, and I must request that you say to these gentlemen that you did not intend to call me a rascal."

"I never said I did," cried Jackson, "but as you are so particular about the language I used, I will inform

the company here assembled that I have no direct proof that you are a rascal but I have conclusive evidence that you are something else. Didn't you say that you had been in Washington within the past fortnight?"

"Yes," replied Claiborne, "but what of that?"

"Oh, that's all right," replied Jackson, "but when I asked you about the Jeffersonian hitching-post being cut up for relics, you said that you heard about it when you were at the Capitol. Now I happen to know that the post is there all right, and my private opinion is, using no names, of course, that somebody is a liar."

"You might as well use my name," cried Claiborne, losing control of himself.

"Well, then, if you wish it, Colonel Claiborne," said the General, "in the presence of the assembled company, I will say that when you told me you had been in Washington during the past fortnight, you lied. If you cannot understand that, I will try to make it more explicit."

"Such language," exclaimed Claiborne, "in the presence of witnesses, entitles me to that satisfaction which no man of honor can refuse to grant me."

"I will give you all the satisfaction you want," replied the General, slowly and deliberately. "In what form do you want it?"

"Either a public apology," said Colonel Claiborne, "before the company present, or you will receive a message from me."

"Then deliver your message right here and now, Colonel Claiborne. I suppose you mean that I must fight you. Well and good." Turning to young Taylor, he said: "Come, Zachary, you must be my second. You are going to join the army and you may as well get used to the sight of blood. Colonel Claiborne, I presume you can find some friend to act for you."

The Colonel spoke to several persons but they excused themselves on various grounds. At last, of his

own volition, Captain McVea approached Colonel Claiborne and offered his services which were gladly accepted.

"Come here, Zachary," said the General, grasping his arm and leading him out of ear-shot of the company, "you must insist on certain points. Being the challenged party, I have the right to select the weapons and I choose broadswords."

"Broadswords!" cried Taylor, "why! you don't know how to use one."

"Neither does he," said the General with a laugh, "if I say pistols or rifles, I shall be sure to kill him for I am a dead shot. If I say swords, such as he carries, he will be sure to kill me for I had as soon fight with a caseknife as one of those frog stickers; and mind you, Taylor, we must be faced ten paces apart. There must be a master of ceremonies, or referee—I think young Scott will be willing to act—and when the master says Ready we are to advance and engage. As soon as either is wounded, the master is to call Time and that will give us a chance to rest and examine the nature of the wound."

"And it will give us seconds a chance," said Taylor, "to see if an amicable adjustment of the difficulty cannot be made."

"Well, you seconds can do all the talking you want to," the General rejoined, "but when I go into a fight, with one man, or a regiment, I mean to win or die in the attempt."

The insulting epithet which had been so publicly applied and the ensuing challenge which had been so publicly given and accepted, with the news of the impending duel, spread over the city like wildfire. The time agreed upon was the next morning at daybreak, and when it arrived the principals and their seconds had reached the ground where they found a large body of spectators in attendance. Winfield Scott had agreed

to act as referee and he took his position about midway between the contestants. A long search had failed to find any broadswords in the city, but, in a gunsmith's shop, a pair of old-fashioned cutlasses were found which, after being sharpened, were shown to General Jackson and he declared they would answer the purpose splendidly.

A hundred pairs of eyes were fastened intently upon the duellists as they stood at the stated distance of ten paces apart. Winfield Scott uttered the word "Ready!" No sooner had it fallen from his lips, when Jackson, grasping his cutlass, crouched down as though he were on the track of an Indian brave and advanced in a stealthy but speedy manner towards his antagonist. The latter was evidently bewildered for he did not know how to meet the attack. He advanced a few steps towards the General, then stood motionless. With a loud yell that startled his hearers, the General straightened up and made a move as if to retreat. Colonel Claiborne involuntarily started forward but the General did not retreat far. With his cutlass extended, he rushed upon his opponent and, before the latter could parry the blow, gave him a severe thrust in the left arm.

"Time!" called the referee, and the contestants returned to their posts. An examination of the wound showed that, although severe, it was not serious, even though the blood flowed freely. A handkerchief was tied about the injured arm, and Colonel Claiborne stood once more at his post. Again, the referee called out "Ready!" This time the General astonished both the spectators and his opponent. Grasping his cutlass in both hands, he swung it from right to left as though it were a scythe, and advanced rapidly towards Colonel Claiborne who was still more at a loss than before to know how to meet his on-coming assailant. Weakened by the loss of blood, and sure that his doom was sealed, his nerve gave way, and he turned and incon-

tinently fled to the woods, closely pursued by the seemingly enraged General.

"Time!" cried the referee at the top of his voice. The General paid no attention but continued his course, still brandishing his cutlass from right to left. Both seconds then joined in hot pursuit. Colonel Claiborne was much lighter in weight and swifter of foot than his older competitor. He reached the woods and was soon lost to sight. The seconds caught up with the General and taking him by the arms, induced him to return to the duelling ground. When he reached it, the whole company of spectators gathered about him and he burst into a hearty laugh. Turning to Taylor, he said:

"I only meant to have some fun with him. That man has a guilty conscience, and no man who has a guilty conscience can ever hope to come out first best in a duel. Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just. I might mention names but I will not, but when a man kills his defamer in a duel and then successfully fights, almost single-handed, all the lawyers that the government can bring against him, I think he is a pretty smart fellow."

The entire company returned to the tavern, where General Jackson's health was drunk at his expense. In a short time he again waxed eloquent and cried out in a voice that sounded like thunder:

"By the Eternal! If I could have my way with Wilkinson and that cub of his, I'd take away their swords, tear off their epaulets and stripes, and drive them out of town to the tune of the Rogues' March."

The next day, he wrote a letter to a friend in Nashville giving a ludicrous account of the duel. "My antagonist," he wrote, "started due West about half-past six A. M. He is evidently still on the way, no word having been received from him at Richmond. He, no doubt, thinks I am still on his track, armed with the avenging cutlass. If you should happen to meet him,

you can assure him that I am going to Washington to make sure about that hitching-post, and that I shall not come West again for several weeks, which will give him plenty of time to get back to New Orleans in safety so as to make arrangements for the proper reception of the heroic Wilkinson."

CHAPTER XXV

THE CITY OF LUTETIA

FIFTY years before the Christian Era, Julius Cæsar, at the head of his victorious Roman legions, ravaged Ancient Gaul, and, after defeating Vercingetorix, encamped in and about the City of Lutetia of which he gives an account in his Commentaries. Eighteen hundred and fifty years thereafter, another great conqueror, the peer of Cæsar, made a great *fête* at Paris, the capital of the country of which he, Napoleon, was emperor, even as Cæsar had been emperor of Rome.

History had repeated itself; or, rather, had reversed itself, for he had gone forth from the City of Paris, built on the site of the ancient City of Lutetia, and the victorious legions of France had, in their turn, ravaged the domain which had been the seat of the Roman Empire under Cæsar.

On the evening of this festal day, the palace of St. Cloud was ablaze with light. The people of France, for Paris was France, were intoxicated with enthusiasm. During the day, the son of the Emperor had been christened and proclaimed King of Rome.

Aaron Burr was one of the immense concourse of spectators that stood in the pouring rain and gazed upon the illuminated palace. He had been an enforced resident of Paris for twenty months, when, of his own free will, he would have limited his stay to a fortnight—possibly a month. Why had he remained so long? It is inconceivable that the French authorities

should have insisted upon retaining within their borders a man who so ardently desired to leave them behind him.

But it was not the fault of the French government that he was denied the desired passports. The opposition came from a different source. General John Armstrong who had been a classmate of Burr at Princeton and who was now United States Minister to France; Jonathan Russell, who was *charge d'affaires* at Paris; and Mr. McRae, Consul at Paris, who had been one of the counsel for the prosecution at Burr's trial for high treason, formed the trio which combined their forces and used every endeavor to prevent Burr's return to his native land.

When one reflects, if he had been allowed to leave France when he desired, that his daughter Theodosia might have been spared to be with him and care for him in his declining years and that her own valuable life and that of her son might have been saved, the responsibility of these three political enemies of Burr for these sad occurrences becomes manifest. It should have caused them a lifelong regret, being an unnecessary sacrifice for which there could be no adequate requital in this world.

To the average mind exile is a most unhappy condition. We imagine the poor outcast driven from home and friends and forced to seek an asylum in some foreign land, surrounded by people who speak a strange language and by customs with which he is not acquainted. He is overcome with homesickness, that *Heimweh* which the Germans consider the most acute mental suffering a human being can endure and live.

No doubt the majority of those who, from casual reading, have learned that Aaron Burr was an exile in Europe for four years, have formed some such picture in their minds of his existence while abroad. But such mental conceptions are not always correct, and the

pages of history, it must be confessed, do not always convey the whole truth.

Fortunately, Aaron Burr left behind him the means of ascertaining just how he passed these four years of exile. To be sure, he was sorry, very sorry indeed to leave his beloved daughter Theodosia, her little son, and his daughter's husband to whom he was greatly attached, and between whom a feeling closely approaching that of love of father and son existed. Burr left many friends behind, but the real ties that it cost him pain to sever were those that bound him to his daughter and her child.

But Burr was sanguine. Whatever misfortune might overtake him, he was hopeful of the future, and during his four years residence in Europe his constant thought was of his return and the joyful meeting to follow with his daughter and her child. In proof of this, the nine hundred printed pages of his diary while in Europe supply conclusive evidence. This diary was not written for publication. It was intended only for the perusal of his daughter, Theodosia. He says many times in the course of it: "I will tell you all of this story when we meet and have our little chats together." It was designed as memoranda to guide him in giving more complete accounts of his travels when, safe at home with his daughter, they sat together during the long summer evenings or the still longer ones that come in winter; and he continually refers to these anticipated conversations.

His enemies, of whom it may safely be said that he had legion, and those persons so little interested in him as to believe anything prejudicial that might be said of him, have constantly spoken and written of the fact that he was reduced to poverty while abroad, but they do not tell the whole truth; perhaps they do not know it. It will be magnanimous to assume that they did not know that some ten thousand dollars due him

in the United States, and which he counted upon receiving from time to time while in Europe, were never paid.

From this fact, Burr was often forced, as anyone in like circumstances might have been, to rely on the kindness or generosity of his friends; but it must be said to his credit that he never borrowed when he could pawn or sell anything of value that he possessed. To his further credit, it must be added that he indulged in no fine raiment for himself; he was abstemious in food and drink; he smoked a pipe because cigars were too expensive; he borrowed newspapers instead of buying them; he lay in bed on cold days to save coal or wood, and he never accepted an invitation to a dinner if he thought the party giving it had any idea of the reduced state of his finances. His extravagances were purchases of presents for Theodosia and her boy, nearly all of which, however, were sold or pawned in order to secure his passage-money home.

A single incident will show the consummate philosophy of the man. One day, while in London, he found that his whole fortune consisted of two half-pence. He wrote in his diary that he was glad he had them instead of a single penny, for he could jingle the half-pence and they sounded more like money.

To such a man, adversity might cause worriment, pain, and suffering, but it could implant no thorns to rankle and smart.

If the tree of life supplied him with fruit, he was grateful therefor; if it gave him but buds and flowers he was thankful; if naught but leaves were denied him he was equally content; if these were beyond reach, the bark of the tree sufficed for his humble wants; if this last failed, he chewed the bitter roots of adversity sweetened by hopes of the future.

And now, after four years of amusing and instructive travel coupled, to be sure, with some privations,

this "poor, miserable outcast," to use the language of his enemies, who had been received everywhere with courtesy and honor by the nobility and by men of science, letters, and art, stood gazing at the palace of St. Cloud—but, he was thinking of his passports. One great pleasure had come to him in Paris which atoned for all the sufferings which he had undergone. He had met and been on terms of the closest social intimacy with Vanderlyn, the little New York boy whom he had christened the "Genius of the Roadside," and for whose early education in art he had supplied the funds.

It is interesting to note the manner in which Burr finally secured his passports. One evening, at a social gathering, he had become acquainted with a Mlle. St. Clair. With the gallantry common to gentlemen of that time, he accompanied the lady to her lodgings and was invited to visit her. Several days afterwards, while making a call there, the conversation turned to pictures and sculpture, and she expressed a desire to view an exhibition of paintings by the great masters which was then being given at the Louvre. Burr endeavored to secure the desired ticket of admittance.

He stated his wish to a friend, the Duc d'Alberg. The Duke gave him a letter to M. Denon who was the Director-General of the exposition at the Louvre.

This meeting with Denon proved to be a most fortunate one. Denon gave him the ticket. Burr was on his way to deliver it to Mlle. St. Clair when he was met by an American named Griswold, then a resident of Paris. Mr. Griswold wished to take a party of ladies to the Louvre but he needed one more ticket. Burr, on learning this, gave him, without hesitation, the one that he had procured for Mlle. St. Clair.

A few days later, he secured a second letter from the Duke to M. Denon, which the latter honored with another ticket. Denon invited him to dine with him,

and there Burr became acquainted with the Duc de Bassano.

The next day, Burr again started to deliver the ticket to Mlle. St. Clair, but, stopping to make a call upon a French gentleman, who was a friend of his, he was introduced to a German lady named Albertine, whom he declares, in his journal, was the most beautiful woman whom he met while in Europe. She expressed a wish to visit the Louvre and Burr, with his natural gallantry, offered to accompany her, using the second ticket that he had obtained for Mlle. St. Clair.

On his third attempt to obtain a ticket, Denon asked him to take breakfast with him. It was on this occasion that Burr called his attention to his South American scheme. M. Denon was much interested and wished to read a copy of the Memorial which Burr had prepared, but which he had, so far, been unable to bring to the attention of the Emperor Napoleon. M. Denon read the Memorial and then put it into the hands of the Duc de Bassano.

Burr was given the third ticket and, as he says in his journal, to prevent all possible contingencies, he walked directly from the Louvre to Mlle. St. Clair's to place it in her hand.

To his third visit to Denon must be ascribed his success in finally securing his passports, for the Duc de Bassano brought the matter to the personal attention of the Emperor.

CHAPTER XXVI

BY COMMAND OF THE EMPEROR

A FEW days after the one upon which he had breakfasted with M. Denon, Burr was sitting in his little room, which was about ten feet square, in the fourth story of a house in the Rue Petite St. Augustin. In one corner of the room was a large bed; the greater portion of the remainder of the room was occupied by a very large table upon which were thrown in promiscuous confusion, letters, food, pipes and tobacco, and articles of clothing. Upon the wall were a few rude shelves on which some books and pamphlets were arranged in an orderly manner. A wood fire was burning in the open fireplace.

In his journal, Burr says that nineteen-twentieths of the chimneys in Paris smoked all the time, and the other twentieth occasionally. He had suffered so much from being obliged to inhale the odor of burnt wood that he decided to rebuild his chimney, but none of the French masons would consent to make the changes that he desired. Finally, by the efforts of a rich English lady, living in Paris, he secured the services of an apprentice who carried out his plans; but, every time he laid a brick, he declared that it was of no use and that he knew it would be of no avail. But to Burr's delight, when the change was completed he found that his fire drew finely, and he was never afterwards troubled with smoke except when a heavy gale blew down the chimney, and being at the top of the house, he was sometimes subjected to this annoyance.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening. Burr had made a frugal meal of bread and butter, cheese, some grapes, and half a bottle of Roussillon wine. He had borrowed some American papers from a friend and was reading and smoking his pipe when there came a loud knock at the door. He had locked it to prevent interruption and so paid no attention to the first rap. Then it came again, louder and more peremptory than before. Burr arose and opened the door. A tall figure entered and, throwing back a long military cloak, disclosed a handsomely embroidered uniform by which Burr knew him to be an equerry of the Emperor.

The equerry addressed him in French: "M. Burr?"

Burr bowed his acknowledgment of the name.

Then the man stated that M. Burr was commanded to present himself at the Palace of the Tuileries by His Majesty, the Emperor. The thought at once flashed through Burr's mind that the Duc de Bassano had presented his Memorial to the Emperor, and that His Majesty wished to see him in relation thereto. Asking the man to give him a few moments in which to attend to his toilet, he made his preparations hastily, and, donning his great surtout, he followed the equerry down the three flights of dark and rickety stairs. Arrived at the door, he found a carriage waiting; they entered and took their seats.

For some little time neither spoke. Then the equerry said:

"Perhaps you are not aware, M. Burr, that when a person, whether of French or foreign birth, is commanded to visit the Emperor and is granted a private interview, it is understood that the party so received is neither to commit to writing, nor to speak to any person of what transpires at the interview. Have I your word of honor, M. Burr, that this custom will be followed by you after your interview with His Majesty?"

"You have," replied Burr, and no more was said until the palace was reached.

Burr followed the equerry through the brilliantly-lighted corridors and was shown into a small reception-room. Here he threw off his surtout and, standing before a full-length mirror, adjusted his wig and the folds of his lace shirt-front. He was not in court dress, nor was it to be expected that he could be under the circumstances.

In a few moments, the equerry returned and Burr followed him through what seemed an endless succession of corridors and passages and finally was shown into a large reception-room, brilliantly lighted. The room was empty. Burr took a seat upon a beautifully upholstered divan. The equerry left the room and closed the door behind him. Burr glanced around the apartment. It was large and very high, with a dome-like ceiling. It was handsomely decorated and a carpet of most exquisite pattern and softness of texture covered the floor. Directly opposite him, some portières covered the entrance to an adjoining room.

Thoughts passed through his mind with the speed of lightning. What should he say? How should he present the ideas that were uppermost in the most favorable manner to His Majesty? The opportunity of his life had come! Perhaps, as the result of this interview, the summit of his ambition might be reached, and he resolved that for once, at least, his pride should be subservient to the other passion—ambition.

As Burr sat waiting for the entrance of the mighty conqueror whose ear he had endeavored so long to gain, the principal events in that man's successful career flashed before his mind. He saw the young Corsican yearning for a wider field of action than the little island of his birth afforded him. Next he saw the ardent student at the military school at Brienne. He saw the "Little Corporal" with his bearded French veterans

ravaging the sunny plains of Italy, like a barbarian monarch despoiling churches, museums, and palaces of their pictures and statues, their treasures of gold and silver, and sending them home to his native land. He saw him take his first step as Consul, next First Consul, then Consul for life.

Then a furious battle scene came before his eyes—the bloody field of Marengo which humbled Austrian pride. Next came before his vision the picture of the coronation, when the impatient conqueror took the crown from the hands of the Pope and placed it upon his own head. Then, to the imperial crown, he saw him add a kingly one when he joined Italy to his domain. Then came the scene of another field of carnage—Austerlitz—where the haughty Austrians were again humbled and made to bite the dust. Then followed the battle of Jena, where the Prussians—who had kept aloof from previous campaigns, and who had hoped to surprise their enemy—met with a crushing defeat. Finally came that sad and ever-to-be regretted scene—the divorcement of the childless Empress—followed so soon by a marriage with the daughter of his enemy. And now the Emperor of France and the Empire of the French had an heir to the throne who only a few days before had been proclaimed King of Rome.

Could the Emperor Napoleon have seen the future of his offspring, with what despair would he have learned that his son was never to sit upon the throne of France; that he was to be educated as an Austrian and every effort made to teach him to hate the land that gave him birth. It would have afforded him some solace to have known that his son ever remained French at heart; that he yearned throughout his short life to return to his native land, and that he was to be immortalized by a French poet, a century later, who, in memory of his noble father, poetically christened him *L' Aiglon,* or "The Eaglet."

While Burr sat deeply engrossed in thought, he heard a slight sound. He glanced up, and the hero of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena stood before him.

Burr sprang to his feet and made a low and courtly bow. Then drawing himself up to his full stature, he looked towards the Emperor. He did not speak, for well he knew that a commoner, in the presence of royalty, must wait for royalty to speak first.

Finally, the Emperor said, "Colonel Burr, from the United States?"

Burr again bowed, and replied simply, "Yes, Your Majesty."

Then the Emperor seated himself, and by a sign, indicated to Burr to do the same, and the latter resumed his position upon the divan.

"The Duc de Bassano," said the Emperor, "has called my attention to your Memorial. I have read the same, but I regret to say that I am so much involved in matters requiring my attention upon the continent of Europe, that I have no time or inclination to undertake conquests so far removed from the Empire. But I am a young man yet. When I have reached your age, I may find time to carry out the purposes of your Memorial."

"When you have reached my age," answered Burr, feeling it was necessary now for him to say something, "Your Majesty will look in vain for other conquests; for, by that time, the whole civilized world will bow to Your Majesty."

"Well," rejoined the Emperor, "if that time ever arrives I shall not, like my friend Alexander, sit down and cry for more worlds to conquer."

For a moment, there was silence. Then the Emperor said, and a strange looked passed over his face, "I judge from what the Duc de Bassano has told me that your career has been a checkered one, and not crowned

with that success which you, no doubt, at one time anticipated."

"That is true, Your Majesty," Burr replied, determined that his pride should be kept down.

"You are still ambitious?" asked the Emperor.

"At my age," began Burr—

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried the Emperor, rising to his feet, "at your age, if you have not been successful, you should be more ambitious than ever."

"Whatever ambition I may have, Your Majesty, would be more than doubled if I knew that I had your recognition, not to say support, of what I may be engaged in."

For a moment, the Emperor seemed to be musing. Then, turning to Burr, he asked:

"To what do you, from your point of view, attribute the success of the French arms?"

"To the acknowledged bravery of the French soldier, and the unequalled military ability of their commander," said Burr, again making a low bow.

"So far so good," rejoined the Emperor, "but you have not stated all."

"No," answered Burr, "there must, of course, be adequate financial support for all military undertakings."

"Well spoken!" replied the Emperor, "but there is another point that you have omitted." Burr did not speak. The point, whatever it might be, was not suggested to him. Then the Emperor said, "You have forgotten the use of statistics."

"Statistics?" asked Burr, glancing up at the Emperor, with a slight look of wonderment upon his otherwise impassive face.

"Yes," said Napoleon, "statistics are the foundation of my success. In the secret archives of the War Department are the names and addresses of every manufactory in the Empire which is capable of furnishing

clothing, food, munitions of war, or other supplies needed for the use of the army. The kind and quality of machinery are recorded, the number of men that can be employed, the quantity of goods that can be manufactured, working a specified number of hours a day, and when employed both day and night. When a campaign is projected, orders are sent to each of these manufactories to turn out a definite quantity of goods on a specified day. These are forwarded to certain designated points on the same day, where they are received by persons who have been instructed how to dispose of them. Thus, within two days, my army is clothed, armed, supplied with provisions and ammunition, and on the third day moves forward to new conquests and greater glory."

Burr's face expressed his admiration for the plan outlined by the Emperor's words.

"You have said," continued the Emperor, "that whatever ambition you possess would be doubled under certain circumstances. Supposing I should offer you a position in my army? What effect would that have upon your ambition?"

"Your Majesty, before accepting," replied Burr, "I should ask but one favor. I have been separated for four years from my only child, a daughter, and my only grandson. I should wish to see them once more. After doing so, I would willingly, gladly, return to France and place my sword and my life at your disposal."

"Be it so!" said the Emperor. "I will give orders to-morrow that a passport, allowing you to leave France, shall be issued to you. Go home, say farewell to your daughter and your grandson; then return to France. I will give you a commission in the French army and, if all else fails you, if you can in no other way reach the summit of your ambition, if you are brave and fearless and faithful to the Empire, you may

yet die a Marshal of France!" As the Emperor uttered these words, he drew back the portières, and an instant later they closed behind him.

In a few moments, the door was opened and the equerry entered. Without a word, Burr followed him to the reception-room where he donned his outer garments. The carriage was reached, and they were driven back to the house in the Rue Petite St. Augustin. Burr mounted the creaking stairs alone and entered his little room. By means of flint and steel he lighted his candle. His fire had gone out but with the burning fire within him he needed no outward warmth. For hours he sat and gazed into the blackened embers. To him they seemed alive with flame, in the midst of which he saw Theodosia and Gampillo. Then the scene changed. There was a figure on horseback, dressed in the uniform of a Marshal of France, he was at the head of his troops, rushing on towards the enemy, and Burr saw that the face of this leader of men was his own.

CHAPTER XXVII

"HOME AGAIN! FROM A FOREIGN SHORE"

EMPERORS do not always keep their word, as pages of history attest. But Napoleon Bonaparte did not forget his promise and Aaron Burr's passports were promptly forthcoming. Burr then proceeded as fast as diligence, post-chaise, and canal-boat could convey him to Amsterdam. He was fortunate in finding there an American vessel called the "Vigilant," commanded by a Captain Coombs. The terms of the passage to America were agreed upon, including the use of a special cabin which was to be fitted up for Burr's accommodation. Then he made a return trip to Paris at the greatest possible speed, utilizing canal-boat, post-chaise, and diligence, they being, in those days, the only means of conveyance.

The acquaintance formed, at M. Denon's, with the Duc de Bassano proved to be one of the fortunate events of his life; for the latter, upon learning his friend's financial condition, generously tendered him a loan of ten thousand francs. With this money, he was able to discharge all his obligations in the city of Paris, and to leave it with all his financial troubles consolidated into one compact debt, owed to a man to whom the sum was a mere bagatelle. Then, by means of the same tedious methods of travel, Burr once more reached Amsterdam and took up his quarters in the cabin provided for him.

But a long and vexatious delay occurred before the vessel sailed. There was war between England and

France. Holland had been annexed to the French Empire, and, consequently, vessels leaving Dutch ports were considered by the officers of the British navy as belonging to the enemy.

The "Vigilant" had no sooner gotten outside the Texel than she was brought to by a shot across her bow from a British man-of-war. Despite the protests of Captain Coombs who persisted that he was *en cartel,* the vessel and its passengers were taken into Yarmouth Roads.

After an investigation by the British authorities, it was decided to release the "Vigilant." Captain Coombs had received certain guarantees which made it much more profitable for him to take his vessel to New Orleans rather than New York, the original port of destination. Burr did not wish to go to New Orleans for many reasons, the principal one being that the money paid for his passage had nearly exhausted his available funds. The trip from England to New York was really easier of accomplishment than the one from New Orleans to New York. Captain Coombs refused to return Burr's passage-money and the vessel sailed before he could take legal steps to compel a restitution. Thus, by no fault of his own, he was left stranded once more in a foreign country.

His enforced residence on this occasion lasted for more than six months, during which he came nearer to the line of absolute poverty than he had at any time during his travels. Many of his critics have dwelt upon this as though his financial sufferings were intended as a punishment for his political and social sins; but the common-sense reader, knowing the real facts, will appreciate the situation and see that even the most godly might have been reduced to the same straits under similar circumstances.

His stay in England was not due entirely to his financial condition. By one of those peculiar decrees of

Fate which are incomprehensible, his old enemy, Jonathan Russell, who had been *charge d' affaires* at Paris, had been transferred to London and now occupied a similar position at the British capital. Once more he had an opportunity to interpose his official influence which he secretly used against Burr, and a considerable part of the time lost was due to the machinations of this malevolent political opponent.

But the tangle of complications was finally unraveled, and, provided with sufficient funds, Burr took passage upon the "Aurora" bound from London for Newburyport, Massachusetts. The weary traveler had had his progress so often interfered with by unexpected circumstances, that he stood upon the deck of the "Aurora" as it passed through the English Channel, in a state of suspense, and watched with eager eyes every war vessel bearing the English colors at its masthead. He gave a great sigh of relief when the "Aurora" passed Lizard Point and soon after was ploughing the waters of the open sea.

When he had sailed from New York for England four years before, he buried all unpleasant associations and looked forward with pleasurable anticipation to his return. That anticipation had become realization, for the exile was now homeward bound. What reception was he destined to have from the country that had rejected him barely four years before? He realized that he was between two continents with but comparatively few friends in either and it must be confessed, with more in the Old World than in the New.

One day, a heavy rain and sullen clouds brought him to a self-repressive mood. He would give up all ideas of social, political, or military preferment; he would work hard at his profession to make a happy home for Theodosia and Gamp; the chief object in his life in future would be to make a great and noble man of his grandson and namesake.

The next day, the skies were bright and a strong, fresh breeze was blowing. With them came a great revulsion in feeling. What had the Emperor said? No! Aaron Burr would rise superior to all adverse circumstances. The judgments of Nemesis were against those who had risen, not against those who were trying to rise. He would return to France; he would win glory and the rank of field-marshal; he would win greater glory and a title of nobility, and then he would return to America and laugh at his enemies. He would take Theodosia and her husband and Gamp to Paris. He would show the French nobility how immense fortunes could be made in America in land speculations. How easy for him it would be to turn their excited minds towards Texas and Mexico. Filled with the grand project, he walked to the bow of the "Aurora" and, like Columbus, saw before him the mighty country which his mind had created. Perhaps Napoleon would put him in charge of the conquering armies and thus secure to him the object of his ambition by placing him upon a throne.

Day by day, these contending forces struggled for mastery. One day, in company with Remorse and Repentance, he descended, with slow steps, into the Valley of Self-effacement; the next day, Pride was his fellow-traveler, and, with long strides, they ascended together the Mountain of Ambition.

The "Aurora" landed her passengers at Boston instead of at Newburyport as had been intended. Burr was disguised so as to escape easy recognition. By arrangement with the British Alien Commissioner, he had taken passage for America under the name of Adolphe Arnot. He spoke the French language with fluency and, by his fellow-travelers, was supposed to be a native of that country. The name Arnot had become endeared to him by old associations. It was the one that he had assumed when, bearing a message from General Bene-

dict Arnold at Quebec to General Richard Montgomery at Montreal, he had traversed one hundred and fifty miles of the enemy's country disguised as a French priest.

He had thirty dollars in his pocket when he reached Boston. Within two days, thereafter, he had loaned all but three dollars of it to friends in more impecunious circumstances than himself. He borrowed when no other resource was left, but, at the slightest solicitation, he would impoverish himself to aid others.

He had written to Samuel Swartwout in New York to ascertain whether it were safe for him to return to that city under his own name, but, at that time, it took five days to send a letter and receive a reply from New York City; besides, his first letter, for some unexplained reason, did not reach its destination. Then again, he had written to Theodosia in relation to his resuming his own name when he reached New York. He knew that his creditors would at once pounce upon him and he would be condemned to "the limits," that is, he would be obliged to give bonds not to go outside of a certain prescribed part of the city, being virtually a prisoner within those boundaries. Theodosia's reply came speedily: "By all means," said she, "resume your own name. I have suffered so much, already, that the thought of your being placed upon the limits by your importunate creditors will not add to my sorrow."

The delay caused by writing these letters and waiting for replies used up all of Burr's available funds. He had brought with him from Europe a great quantity of valuable books and pamphlets. He wrote a letter to a wealthy Bostonian who had been a classmate of his at Princeton asking him to buy certain valuable books and explaining that his pecuniary condition was the reason for making such a request. The wealthy Bostonian replied curtly that he had retired from business and could not engage in any further commercial trans-

actions. Burr rolled up the letter and made use of it as a spill for lighting his pipe.

An old soldier who had been in Arnold's command during the attack on Quebec, and who had there become acquainted with Burr, was now a resident of Boston. Burr, providentially, ran across him, and, although he did not tell the old soldier his exact financial condition, the latter surmised it. Learning, in the course of conversation, that the traveler had brought with him many valuable books, the old soldier arranged a meeting at Cambridge with President Kirkland of Harvard College. The President bought for the College Library two French dictionaries, paying Burr forty dollars for them. As they were worth much more money, he gave Burr the option of redeeming them for the price paid at any time within a year.

Burr was now provided with the necessary funds and paid twenty dollars for his passage to New York on the sloop " Rose." He was delighted when they arrived at Hell Gate at seven o'clock in the evening, for it had been his wish to reach New York after dark so that he would not be at once recognized. But the captain of the " Rose " did not dare to venture on making the passage through Hell Gate in the dark, and came to anchor. A sailboat was passing close to and Burr hailed the two occupants and made a trade with them to land him in New York for three dollars. The navigators of the boat were two Long Island farmers and they endeavored to carry out their part of the agreement, but wind and tide were against them and they, too, were obliged to come to anchor. But Burr rose superior to all difficulties. A skiff containing two villainous-looking individuals, probably river thieves, came in sight and Burr made another trade—which was that for the sum of one dollar he was to be landed upon a New York pier. This final attempt to reach his destination was crowned with success.

At midnight, on the seventh of June, 1812, Burr stood alone, in disguise, and under an assumed name in the streets of the city of New York—the city where eight years before, of all names his had been the most powerful. Surely, Nemesis had done her work well.

He experienced much difficulty in securing a lodging, and, after an hour of weary travel, the former Vice-President of the United States was forced to sleep that night in the attic of a cheap lodging-house with seven other lodgers in a small and unventilated room.

The next day he met Samuel Swartwout. They compared notes and Burr found that it was just four years to a day since he had parted from his friend Swartwout at the identical house in which they were then staying. Swartwout had been making inquiries among Burr's friends, previous to his arrival, and told him that Colonel Troup, an old army friend of his, was willing to give him a desk in his law office and would assist him in getting some law business.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AS IN DAYS OF YORE

AS Samuel Swartwout gazed upon the scene before him, a smile sat upon his face. His friend, Aaron Burr, had been in New York but two short weeks since his return from his long sojourn of four years in Europe. Samuel had been appointed a committee of one to make arrangements for a complimentary dinner to be given to his old friend and political associate.

The table had been laid in the big room of a retired and respectable tavern. Seats had been provided for eighteen persons and he had received either verbal or written assurances that all the invited guests would surely be on hand.

The dinner had been set for eight o'clock, but long before that time the guests began to arrive. Many of them had not seen each other for years and the handshakings and congratulations were numerous and hearty. There were the brothers John and Samuel Swartwout; Colonel Troup, with whom Burr had made arrangements to share a part of his law office; Colonel Knapp, an old friend of Burr's who had come on from Massachusetts; Luther Martin who, in order to greet his friend, had made a trip from Maryland; and Doctor Eric Bollman who, although a resident of Philadelphia, happened to be in New York at the time fixed for the festivities and had gladly accepted an invitation to be present. The balance of the company was composed of Matthew L. Davis and ten other residents of New

York City who were either social or political friends of Aaron Burr.

Punctually at the hour fixed upon, the man in whose honor the dinner was given made his appearance clad in his accustomed habit of black velvet. Although in his fifty-seventh year, he had never been a handsomer man than on the present occasion, and his eyes sparkled with a brilliancy which convinced all that they had lost none of their original force and fire.

He accepted the congratulations of his friends in his usual urbane and polished manner and thanked them individually for the great civility thus extended to him and the honor conferred upon him by their presence.

After the repast was over, Samuel Swartwout arose to make a short address of welcome.

"As in days of yore, when we met at the festal board in company with our former associate and political chieftain, we have a double purpose in view; first, to extend to him our hearty welcome and congratulations upon his safe return; second, to wish him long life and prosperity, and to express the hope that the power once in his hands, but temporarily wrested from them, may be once more restored to his grasp."

These sentiments were loudly applauded by the assembled guests, and Burr, rising, bowed his acknowledgment. Swartwout continued:

"I am aware that this is not Richmond Hill; but we have with us to-night the man whose wit and eloquence and marked personality of character gave to that famous mansion the great charm that it always possessed for those who were so fortunate as to be honored with invitations to become guests within its walls."

Swartwout sat down. His closing words were received with another outburst of applause. Burr rose once more and again bowed his appreciation of the neatly-worded compliment. Remaining standing, he said:

"During my exile of four years in Continental Europe, I have had ever before my mind a picture such as I gaze upon to-night. Hundreds of times, while sitting in my lonely lodgings in some foreign city, have I pictured to myself a brightly-lighted room and a well-laden table, with the faces of my friends about it, such as I see here to-night. I will own that I have had another picture in my mind and that has been some pleasant room in which I sat in company with my beloved daughter Theodosia, my little grandson, and my daughter's husband who loves me as a father and whose filial affection is fully reciprocated by me. The man of wealth, situated as I have been, might have thought of his treasures in ships, in land, and gold, but to me those faces of my friends and relatives were a greater treasure than any which can be measured by money value. Let me speak frankly to you. I do not return with any hope, I may say desire, to regain any former political prominence that I may have held in the city, state, or nation. I shall resume my place at the bar and shall endeavor, as all honest citizens should, to earn my livelihood, and in this undertaking I know I shall have the kind assistance of these gentlemen present to-night, as well as that of other friends who are not present.

"I may be pardoned for noticing the absence of my old-time friend and valued associate, Judge Van Ness who, I understand, is absent in the West for business purposes. I know you did not come here to-night to listen to an oration by me, but rather to have me tell you in a simple, conversational way some of my experiences during my travels; and, as their recital will occupy considerable time, I know you will excuse me if, while so engaged, I resume my seat."

The decanters of wine and bottles of stronger beverages were now placed upon the table, and many of the guests, after partaking, lighted their cigars and

settled themselves into comfortable positions to participate in what they knew would prove to be an enjoyable literary feast. The conversation was general for some time, but it was immediately hushed when Chairman Samuel Swartwout pounded upon the table with his knife-handle to bring the assemblage to order.

Burr began to speak in a conversational tone, but his enunciation was so perfect that every word was distinctly heard.

"I will spare you an account of my ocean trip. As usual, it was long and tedious and I was as overjoyed as my fellow-travelers when the shores of Old England loomed up in the distance. I make no secret of what you probably all know. I left New York in disguise and under an assumed name. When I reached London, I sought out and secured modest lodgings in a respectable quarter of that great city. My first visit was to Mrs. Prevost who was a relative of the mother of my Theodosia. Her son, now Sir George Prevost, was at that time in the West Indies fighting the French. Now, as you all know, he is Governor-General of Canada and will probably lead the British forces in the approaching hostilities between our country and England.

"One of my first acquaintances, Jeremy Bentham, was also one of the most enjoyable I made while in Europe. Bentham is a great man but one who will not be fully appreciated in this generation. My intimacy with him was delightful, and he made his country house at Barrow Green and his city mansion in Queen's Square Place, as much mine as if I had been their owner. His city house bore the very quaint title of 'The Bird Cage.'

"I did not go to England without a fixed purpose in my mind. I made many ineffectual attempts to bring my business to the attention of the British Minister, but without success. Having an invitation to visit

Edinburgh I decided to accept it. On my way I stopped at Oxford. I was dined and wined by the professorial dons, and, as some slight return for their civilities, I talked politics and religion with them."

The first interruption to Burr's continued discourse came at this point.

"Did you find them firmly set in the old theology?" asked Doctor Bollman, with his broad German accent.

"Not at all," replied Burr, with a laugh. "I found everything in a chaotic state in England; law, politics, and religion were all in a most unsettled condition. It seemed to me as though all the men of dull intellect and feeble powers were in office, while the able and intellectual ones were on the outside, but yet unable to overcome the prestige of those in power." He resumed his narrative. "At the Scottish capital I had a most pleasurable time. I was particularly pleased with the lads and lassies who sang the old Scotch songs for me."

"Did you ask them to dance?" asked Mr. Davis.

"There was no need of it. The man with the bagpipes was to be found everywhere and I was treated to many exhibitions of their national dances, including the celebrated Highland Fling. The Scotch people, I mean the young ones, approach the French in their spirit and vivacity."

"I presume you made many acquaintances there," remarked Colonel Troup.

"Yes. One of the most enjoyable was that of David Williamson, a brother of Charles Williamson who used to be one of my most intimate personal friends. David is now Lord Balgray and a great legal light at the Scotch bar. I met Walter Scott who had published The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, The Lay of The Last Minstrel, and Marmion. I think Scott is destined to become the greatest author that Scotland has ever produced.

"The Duchess of Gordon invited me to her castle and gave a *fête* in my honor, where I met a great many representatives of the Scottish nobility.

"When I returned to London, I bore with me some strong endorsements of my Mexican and South American schemes from people whom I had met while there, and I made another ineffectual effort to secure an audience with the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, but I was unsuccessful."

"The times are not yet ripe for your schemes, my dear Colonel," said Doctor Bollman. "You may not live to see their accomplishment, but I believe in them, and the world will one day have to acknowledge that you were the most far-seeing man of your time."

"I wish the world was composed of Doctor Bollmans," said Burr, with a laugh in which the company joined. "But now my troubles were to begin. Some parties in England, instigated, I suppose, by my political enemies at home, endeavored to convince the Alien Commissioner that, being an alien, I had no right to remain in England. I determined to test their knowledge of their own law and boldly claimed that I was still a British subject while on British soil, despite my antecedent connections. Then the lawyers consulted their lawbooks and the judges read over their decisions and the law professors hunted after precedents.

"I was not molested by the Alien Commissioner, for they learned just what I knew they would, that by British law, as soon as a British-born subject sets foot upon British soil, no matter if he has fought against the mother country and has sworn allegiance to some foreign sovereign, he at once becomes possessed, while on British soil, of all his natural rights as a British subject."

"Many of your enemies in this country," remarked Colonel Knapp, "have tried to make a point against your patriotism on account of your declaration."

"Yes, I know," said Burr, "that is because they understand partisan politics better than they do English law.

"Finding that they could not eject me from England on the plea that I was an alien, as Byron says, a change came o'er the spirit of their dream. I received a very polite note from Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, informing me that my presence in England was an embarrassment to the English government, and in which he asked me, very politely, if I would leave the country. When approached in a civil manner I never mean to be outdone in civility, and I replied that I would depart from England if the government would supply me with free transportation for myself and baggage and leave me at a port of destination to be selected by myself. My conditions were complied with, and, in due time, I was landed at Gothenburg in Sweden, having been a resident of the British Isles for about eleven months.

"Not understanding a single word of the Swedish language, some enjoyable and some unpleasant occurrences took place. I went to Stockholm to see a review of the Swedish troops, a war with Russia being threatened. As I looked at them, I recalled the remark of Peter the Great that he had so improved the condition of the Russian army that he was able to fight the Swedes when he had four Russians to one Swede. He added that he hoped some day to make the odds even.

"I went to Upsala, the seat of the world-renowned university, where I talked daily with the most learned men in Europe and read ancient Swedish law in the original Latin. Among educated people, I found that my knowledge of French stood me in good stead. I traveled northward to see the gigantic statue of the Scandinavian god Thor. This being the evening of the fourth day of the week is part of Thor's day."

"Did you like Sweden?" asked Luther Martin. In

accordance with his usual custom, he had indulged very freely in the beverages supplied; and, up to this time, although an attentive listener, had evinced no disposition to question the speaker.

"It is a fine country," said Burr. "The roads are the best to be found in Europe, and the people the most honest. They have no courts for petty offences as the people are never guilty of slight misdemeanors. There is one Swedish custom, however, of which I could never become an admirer, and that is the habit possessed by both sexes of entering your sleeping apartment at any hour of the day or night, unannounced. The doors have no locks and the only way in which you can secure any privacy is by piling up the furniture against them, and even then they will make the most determined efforts to remove the obstruction.

"Returning to Stockholm, I crossed the Cattegat in an open boat and landed at Elsinore in Denmark."

"Was Prince Hamlet at home?" asked John Swartwout.

"No," said Burr, with a smile, "but I stood for an hour, in the daytime I am sorry to say, on the battlemented tower where Prince Hamlet had stood when his father's ghost appeared to him and told him of the fearful murder committed by his faithless mother and her paramour. At Copenhagen, the high public functionaries extended to me marked official courtesies and social civilities. If I had been the sovereign of some European kingdom I could not have been treated better than I was in Germany. Everywhere, I stood or sat at the right hand of royalty. Kings, princes, princesses, and grand dukes were my daily companions who met me on the plane of social equality.

"At Frankfort, I met the beautiful Princess Louise. She was so affable and courteous that I begged some souvenir of our pleasant acquaintance."

"I will wager you asked for something that she wore," broke in Martin.

"You are right, my learned friend," replied Burr. "I asked her for a garter, but she blushingly refused."

"I thought as much," said Martin, which provoked a loud laugh among the guests.

"But I got my souvenir."

"What was it," asked Martin, "a stocking?" But this time there was no laughter from the guests. They evidently thought that the pleasantry had gone far enough.

"No," said Burr, pleasantly. "She sent me a beautiful bouquet of flowers painted on porcelain. There was no name attached so I returned it and asked her to at least affix her initials; instead of which she sent me a charming little note."

"Which you have no doubt added to your collection of similar missives," said Martin. This hit was so palpable that Burr himself joined his guests in the merriment which followed.

"At Weimar, I met Göethe, the greatest poet that Germany has produced. He had just finished the first part of his Faust and Marguerite. He told me that it had been in his mind for years and it would probably be many years more before he completed it, but he hoped to do so before his death."

At this point, the door was opened and a little boy and girl entered the room. They were meanly clad and their faces showed signs either of want or recent sickness. Mr. Davis, who sat nearest the door, turned to them, and said in a sharp tone: "Get out of here! You have got into the wrong room." They turned to go, but, as they did so, a most sorrowful expression settled upon their faces. Burr's quick eye took in the situation and, pushing back his chair, he quickly followed the children from the room. The guests looked towards

the closed door and many guesses and surmises were made as to Burr's object in going after them.

He soon returned leading one by each hand. On their faces, bright smiles had driven away the former sorrowful expressions. "Gentlemen," said Burr, leading the children forward, "I wish to add to our little company my two companions. Both their grandfathers fell while fighting bravely to secure the liberty of our country. Their father lost an arm and a leg in the Continental army, but while he lived managed to secure a bare subsistence for his wife and little ones. Now he is dead and his wife is unable to support them without their assistance. They earn money by going from tavern to tavern and singing to the guests there assembled a simple little song which tells in rhyme the story which I have just related. Shall we listen to them?"

Cries of "Yes," "Of course," "Certainly," came from the company. Burr placed the children in an advantageous position and then resumed his seat at the table.

The voices of the children, naturally weak, were not unmusical. The poetry was in reality mere doggerel written in a stilted and conventional fashion. But the little singers knew the meaning and felt the force of every word as it fell from their lips, and the song reached the hearts of their listeners. Before they closed, Burr had covered his eyes with his hand and, no doubt, was thinking of the little boy who bore his name. Supposing he were ever to be reduced to such a state of want and misery and had no kind friends to come to his relief?

The little song was over and was received with applause. "They are very much to be pitied," remarked Mr. Davis. "It is a shame that the country does not provide for the support of the families of its veteran soldiers."

"Republics are always ungrateful," remarked Burr, "but what they fail to do, good citizens should combine to do in their collective capacity. I pity these poor children very much. I pity them ten dollars worth," said he as he arose and took that sum from his purse. He placed the money upon an empty plate and said: "Gentlemen, how much do you pity them?"

The plate was passed around the table and when it finally reached Burr's hands again the sum of money that it contained amounted to nearly thirty dollars. Emptying the money remaining in his purse into his hand, he put it in his pocket. Then he placed the contributions in the purse and gave it to the boy who was the elder of the two, with a strict injunction to give it to his mother. Then, stepping to the door, he called a waiter. He whispered something in his ear. A few minutes later, the servant returned bearing a large basket.

"Gentlemen," said Burr, "there are many dainties upon the table, some of which are untasted, while of others only a portion has been eaten. With your kind permission, I will send some of them to the mother of these poor children."

As with one accord, the guests jumped to their feet and vied with each other in supplying Burr with viands from the table.

"Put in a couple of bottles of wine," said Martin. "It will help to build up the mother's strength. No doubt she is worse off than the children."

The old lawyer's suggestion was complied with and the waiter was instructed to accompany the children home and give the contents of the basket to the mother with the compliments of Aaron Burr and his friends. Burr offered the waiter some compensation for his trouble but he refused it.

"Can you sing any other song?" asked Burr, when the children were ready to depart.

"We know one more," said the little girl, "that mother taught us."

"What is it?" asked Burr.

"Mother is Scotch," said the little girl, "and so was father. They used to sing Auld Lang Syne and we learned it from them."

"Make room in the centre of the table, gentlemen," cried Burr. A space was soon cleared. Burr lifted the children, one at a time, as gently as the most loving father could have done, and stood them side by side in the centre of the table. Then the guests arose from their chairs without any suggestion and stood about the table. The little voices sang the words of the song and the chorus was taken up by Burr and his guests. As he placed the children once more upon the floor, he kissed each upon the forehead and they then ran out of the room behind the waiter with his ponderous basket, the sound of their childish laughter floating back into the room.

And thus ended Aaron Burr's formal welcome home to his native land by his tried and true friends.

CHAPTER XXIX

A FATHER'S LOVE

IT was early in the month of January in the year 1813. Burr sat at his desk in Colonel Troup's office. The latter, who was suffering from some slight physical ailment, had gone home. The hour was between one and two o'clock. During the morning, a long stream of visitors had had its wants attended to and had departed. Burr had just returned from the coffee-house where he had obtained his lunch and was smoking a cigar. It was with difficulty that he had found sufficient money to pay for the modest meal which he had enjoyed. Upon his desk stood four large law-books arranged in the form of a rectangle which he called "The Well." Into this well, it was his custom to throw each day all the money received by him for fees and retainers. That morning he had had many calls from the orphans and widows of Revolutionary soldiers, from relatives of former political allies, and from many former political associates who were now themselves in reduced circumstances. To none of them did he turn a deaf ear. None of them went away without some substantial recognition of their request for pecuniary aid. In but few cases were any written acknowledgments taken as a record of the loan. In fact, Colonel Burr gave as little personal attention to the repayment of money loaned as he did to the repayment of money borrowed. To use an idiomatic expression, he was built that way; if he could make one account square another, financially speaking, he was satisfied.

He leaned back in his armchair, gave several strong puffs from his cigar, and glanced up at the picture of Theodosia which hung on the wall opposite him. Then he soliloquized half to himself and half aloud: "With what opposite feelings of aversion and attraction did I return to my native land after an exile of four years. As I walked through the streets of Boston in disguise and under an assumed name, I questioned if it were not better that Aaron Burr should die a civil death and that Adolphe Arnot should succeed to his fortune." He leaned back in his armchair and laughed satirically. "My fortune!" Then his manner changed. "No, that thought conquered me in a weak moment; it was unworthy of Aaron Burr who still has fortune and fame before him." He arose from his chair, walked across the room and leaned his elbow on the old colonial mantelpiece, beneath which a bright wood fire was burning, the logs and gnarled roots sending a shower of sparks up the wide-mouthed chimney, occasionally throwing some into the office itself where they expired harmlessly on the sanded floor. "I came here, found friends as well as foes. My dear Troup gave me this office—put business in my way—the first three weeks I took two thousand dollars in fees—with strength of will and Theodosia and her boy—"

Before he could complete his speech, the office door was opened suddenly and Blennerhassett's old servant, Ransome, entered. The old negro's face was beaming with smiles, and as Burr advanced towards him with outstretched hand he emitted one of those oily, unctuous chuckles, the vocal construction of which he had evidently not forgotten. Burr cried:

"Welcome, Ransome! Your old black face looks brighter than an angel's to me for you bring me tidings from my daughter Theodosia and Gamp. Speak! Are they well?"

Ransome assumed a politic expression: "Lor' bless

you, Massa, they were well, very well when I lef' 'em mos' three weeks ago. Miss Theodosy, she was nervous like 'cause she hadn't got no letter from you, and Massa Gamp, he, well he was a little ailin', but take 'em all together everybody was well."

Burr did not apparently notice the conflicting elements in Ransome's statement. "Yes, yes, poor girl, my letters must have often failed to reach her—and poor Gamp—just like his mother—such a slight physical frame. But you didn't come alone, Ransome?"

"Lor' bless you, no, Massa," cried Ransome. "I came with Massa Alston. You know there's a war with England and Massa Alston is goin' to be a general. We stopped in Washington and Philadelphy and we jess got to New York this noon. He sent me out to find you. He is at the inn reading his letters. He said when I found you to come and tell him and he would come to see you right off."

"I suppose," said Burr, "that he has a letter from Theodosia. I, too, am expecting one by this mail. Do you know where the post-office is, Ransome?" The old negro nodded. "Well, here is some money; go and see if you can bring me that most welcome of all gifts—a letter from my daughter Theodosia."

With another chuckle, Ransome left the office. He had no sooner closed the door when it was opened again and what Burr supposed to be a client enterd.

"How do you do, Burr?" the newcomer remarked.

Burr resumed the chair before his desk. Then he addressed the visitor: "Good afternoon, sir. Have a chair? How can I serve you?"

"You can't serve me at all," the man replied, "I have come to serve a writ on you—not the first time I have had that pleasure."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Burr, "I never saw you before."

The man rejoined: "Your memory is poor, Burr.

Have you forgotten Blennerhassett Island and your arrest for treason by Mr. Graham—that's me—the special agent of the United States government. You have fallen considerably in public estimation since then, Burr." Up to this time Graham had remained standing. He now accepted Burr's invitation, and, throwing himself into the proffered chair, looked patronizingly at Burr.

Burr fixed his sharp eyes upon him: "You must have risen in public estimation."

"How so?" asked Graham.

"Because," replied Burr, "any honest employment commands more respect than does the life of a spy and informer."

Graham smiled: "Well, I won't get mad about that; that's all gone by now. That duel of yours with Hamilton was a foolish piece of business."

"You do not have a very high opinion of my late antagonist," remarked Burr, coolly.

"Hamilton was a gentleman in every respect," said Graham.

"If I had not known that, I never should have met him," Burr answered, proudly.

Graham smiled again: "It's a pity you were not always so particular about your company. You have aided a great many bad men, Burr—fellows with pretty black characters."

Burr looked at the brightly-burning fire in the grate: "They may be black to the world, I care not how black; they were ever white to me."

"I am afraid their gratitude never did you much good," the other remarked.

Burr arose from his chair:

"There you are mistaken. Let me give you an instance. After the attack on Quebec, during the retreat, I found an English officer dying from starvation. I gave him water and a piece of dried horse-tongue that

I fortunately had with me. Thirty-six years after, I met this officer in Scotland and, with his daughter, over a good dinner, we fought our battles over again. I saved the life of an enemy and made two friends. Is gratitude lacking there?"

Graham arose and waved the paper that he held in his hand back and forth: "I have no time to listen to stories. How about this writ—what are you going to do about it?"

"In two hours the claim shall be settled," Burr replied.

"Well, if it isn't, you know," began Graham—

Burr answered the implied threat: "Sir! I told you the claim would be settled in two hours. Good afternoon." After Graham went out, Burr said to himself: "The insolence of that fellow! But I conquered myself and that conquered him. That claim of Graham's against me is an unjust one, but it would open many old wounds to defend myself—as I could. I will pay it. To gain a footing here I will even submit to injustice."

While talking, Burr had risen from his chair and walked up and down the room. The office door was thrown open and a loud voice inquired:

"Does Colonel Burr have an office here with Colonel Troup?"

Burr turned quickly. That voice was well known to him. It had lost none of its directness or ringing quality.

"Is that you, Van Ness?" he cried. "Come in! I am delighted to see you." The two men who had been intimate friends at the bar, on the hustings, and on the field of honor, grasped each other's hands warmly.

"I am glad to see you again, Burr, after your long——"

Burr broke in: "Exile! call it by its right name, Van Ness." The two old friends seated themselves. Van Ness accepted the proffered cigar.

"I should have seen you sooner, Burr, but my health has been quite poor and I have been out West looking after some investments and having a little change of scene after so many years spent as lawyer and judge. Age does not seem to bear down heavily upon you, Burr. But how is that dainty little lady, your daughter?"

"I am sorry to say," replied Burr, "that she is not in very good health, and she never will be as long as she lives near those cursèd rice swamps. If I could only induce her to come to New York and live here with me, I should be the happiest of men."

"I have always considered your love for your daughter, Burr, one of the most remarkable traits of a very remarkable man."

"Remarkable is not synonymous with successful, you know, Van Ness."

"The true measure of success," his friend replied, "is found within our own souls and is not determined by the estimate that others place upon our actions. You, at least, have been successful in rearing a daughter worthy of your utmost love."

"Yes," assented Burr, "my love for my daughter is the best and truest part of me. My affection for her and my ambition for military renown have been the moving springs of my life."

"How about law, politics, and the ladies?" asked Van Ness, with a smile.

"Never loved for themselves, but only as means to an end. I would rather conquer one city than a thousand hearts. I would rather write one military proclamation than a thousand briefs or four presidential messages."

Van Ness abruptly changed the subject: "I hope your health was good while you were away."

"Poor health is a crime for which I could never forgive myself. A sick man is a very contemptible animal,

Van Ness. How have my enemies busied themselves during my absence?"

"In discussing your political and social achievements," laughed Van Ness.

"Has the bitterness against me on account of Hamilton's death died out to any extent?"

"But little," his visitor replied. "The mere mention of your name leads his friends to revive the whole misfortune. It is like waving a red flag before a mad bull."

"Ah! Van Ness, if I had read Sterne more and politics less, I should have known that the world was wide enough for Hamilton and me. And the Blennerhassett matter? Has the public mind regained its reason?"

"Your enemies still maintain that you intended to bring about a separation of the Union."

Burr cried, indignantly:

"What a baseless falsehood! I should as soon have thought of taking possession of the moon and informing my friends that I intended to divide it among them. To what other attacks have I been subjected?"

"Your past social victories have caused much animated discussion. By the way, Colonel, were you really the gay Lothario they say you were?"

"I will answer that as a discreet maiden would," replied Burr. "I never kiss and tell."

"That is what troubles them. Some say that you will tell and mean to tell. They say you have in your possession letters that would compromise the fair fame of many ladies in high social position and that it is your intention to use these letters as levers to lift you back into the social circle that now rejects but fears you."

"They can dismiss their foolish fears. I should as soon poison the springs and food that gave sustenance to my enemy as divulge one thought that would injure those ladies who have trusted me. Van Ness, those letters are in safe hands. While I live, they may protect me from unscrupulous enemies. When I am dead,

they shall be burned. They shall never be used for a *post mortem* vengeance. Let me tell you a little story. One day, I was looking at some of my love trophies when I was startled by a knock at the door. I pushed the articles into the box and locked it, and then admitted my fair visitor. Her eye lighted upon a scrap of ribbon which bound a lock of hair that I had failed to put away. With true feminine intuition, she surmised that I had had a visitor. 'Come! tell me directly, what little French girl you have had here. Whose hair is this?' I summoned all my dignity and said: 'Madam, it belonged to a lady who was once under my protection; and a woman who has once borne that relation is sacred to me forever.'"

"I suppose your fair visitor's confidence was strengthened by your remarks," said Van Ness, with a grim smile.

"I have a very vivid recollection that it was."

"To own one's peccadilloes is manly," remarked Van Ness, "but is it equally so to assume responsibilities that do not belong to you? You never denied publicly the assertions of Mrs. D— which you told me privately were untrue."

"Van Ness," replied Burr, in a serious tone, "when a lady publicly proclaims me as her participant in an affair of gallantry, I trust I shall always be too much of a gentleman to disavow the implied honor."

How strange it is that Nature often implants in the human form mental attributes of the highest degree and couples with them physical propensities of the lowest order. It would seem as though these opposite qualities were combined in order to prevent the inordinate exaltation which follows the use and application of the highest mental attainments. Nature herself supplies a parallel. In the tropical regions, flowers and plants reach the most luxuriant growth and possess the most vivid coloring; but, as attendants upon this wealth of

beauty, Nature sends the most venomous reptiles, the most poisonous insects, and the most noxious vapors. It would seem as though the highest development in all forms of life were joined to that of lesser worth in order to secure something approaching an equality of endowment.

The minds of philosophers often lead them to strange conclusions; to some, evil is but the lesser good; to others, pain is but pleasure intensified; the Buddhists teach that all pain springs from desire; remove desire, pain vanishes, and Nirvana, or endless quiet, peace, and contentment follow.

Another parallel. Hamilton never tired, in those letters which he wrote to personal or political friends, and even to persons with whom he was not acquainted, of calling Aaron Burr the Catiline of America. The simile was incorrect and inappropriate. Aaron Burr never resembled Catiline in the slightest degree. Had Hamilton but compared Burr to Julius Cæsar there would have been both truth and aptness in the allusion. History informs us that "Julius Cæsar's besetting sin was sensuality, but, without meaning to detract from the criminality of his conduct in this respect, it may be said that it was as much the sin of the times in which he lived as his own, and that the superlative grandeur of his position gave a prominence to his licentiousness which a more humble lot would have escaped. His intellect was marvellously versatile; in everything he excelled. He was not only the first general and statesman of his age, but he was, excepting Cicero, its greatest orator. As an historian he has never been surpassed and rarely equalled in simplicity and vigor of style, and in the truthfulness with which he narrates events of which he was an eye-witness. He was, in addition, a mathematician, philologist, jurist, and architect, and always took great pleasure in literary society."

There is one discordant note in this parallel. In

modern times, the American Julius Cæsar killed the American Brutus instead of Brutus killing Cæsar!

Van Ness took a sealed packet from his pocket and extended it to Burr. "Do you recognize that?" Burr nodded. "I have had it in my possession now for nearly nine years. Judging from what the doctors tell me about my physical condition, you are likely to outlive me and I have thought it best to place this valuable document again in your hands."

As he said this, he laid it on the desk before Colonel Burr. "I wish you would look at this matter in the same light as I do, Colonel. I believe there never was a more auspicious time to break the seals of that document and make its contents public than the present. It would open hundreds of doors that are now closed to you. You are still a young man; you give promise of living to an advanced age and there is no reason why your closing years should not be blessed with that prosperity and happiness which have so far been denied you except in a transitory and limited way."

"Thank you," replied Burr, "I appreciate to the fullest extent the earnest friendship and good will that have prompted you to utter those words, but I must adhere to my original determination. I prefer to be vindicated before sixty million intelligent, unbiased freemen, the future citizens of the United States, rather than seek such vindication from seven million of my present fellow-citizens. The whole lump is leavened with prejudice, and the children are being brought up to think as their fathers and mothers do. My hope is in the third generation."

"Perhaps you are right," replied Van Ness, "but, at any rate, I know it is useless to attempt to change your mind. My interest in and regard for you led me to accept the charge of this packet, and I now deliver it again into your keeping, knowing that you will transmit it to——"

"To younger ones, I may," exclaimed Burr, "but none more interested or more devoted. Well, good-bye for the present," said Burr, as Van Ness rose to go. "Drop in within an hour if you can; I expect a letter from Theodosia and I know you will be glad to hear from her."

"Certainly I shall," his friend replied. "I will run in again. I hope you will hear only the best of news." They shook hands once more. The door closed, but Van Ness's heavy tread could be heard until he had descended the flight of stairs that led to the street.

The afternoon, so far, had been unusually prolific in old-time suggestions. "Those letters," thought Burr to himself. "They would fan the fiery feelings of many a brother, husband, and father, and lead to many a duel. No! I have had enough of duelling; the dead man wins the battle after all. I will never use those letters as a weapon if they let me alone. If my enemies go too far, their sisters, wives, and daughters may give them good advice."

There was a timid knock at the door. "A lady," thought Burr, and instead of calling out, "Come in," Burr opened the door himself and admitted a very handsome woman, apparently about thirty years of age. Burr did not recognize her, but, naturally, made one of his courtly bows and, in his genial, winning manner, said:

"I am delighted to see you Mrs. ——"

"Not Mrs., but Miss—Miss Kent."

Burr, for once, forgot himself and said, unthinkingly: "What! Miss Kent yet?"

"Yes, Miss Kent yet!" replied the lady, with some asperity in her tone.

With his usual facility, he extricated himself from this dilemma. "Well, Madam, if you are Miss Kent, yet, I venture to assert that it is not the fault of my sex."

The lady smiled and said: "You do not recognize me, Colonel Burr. No wonder; it is eight years since we met. I was then plain Emily Kent——"

"Seven years change the man. No wonder it has taken one year more to transform plain Emily into beautiful Emily."

Colonel Burr led the lady to a chair and then took a seat himself. "I read something in the paper a few days ago," remarked Miss Kent, "that, under certain circumstances, might induce me to marry."

"What was it?" asked Burr, showing great interest.

"Listen and I will tell you," said Miss Kent. "A man quarreled with his wife and he has been adjudged insane and sent to an asylum."

Both laughed heartily and Burr remarked: "If the judges take that view of the case our lunatic asylums will soon be full of married men."

"Did you have a fine time in Europe?" Miss Kent inquired.

"Like a year's weather—some sunshine and some shadow. I saw Vanderlyn."

"I remember him," said Miss Kent. "You told us about him one evening at a dinner party at Richmond Hill. I shall never forget the beautiful times I had there. I was only seventeen then, and your great house seemed an enchanted palace to me. How is he getting on?"

"He is doing famously. I dined and wined with poets, authors, diplomats, princes and princesses, queens and kings. I put the kings last where they belong. Let me give you a maxim, Emily; read a book before you see the author. I was introduced to one in a Paris *salon*. He talked book for an hour, and, as I had not read his work, you can imagine my misery. But even that was not as painful as my experience the next day."

"Why, what happened then?"

"I read his book."

"What! was it bad?"

"The plot was beautiful—in Shakespeare's hands it could have been made famous for all time, but my poor literary friend was unequal to the task."

"What was the story?"

"Only this simple tale of human anguish and misery. A poor Venetian gondolier loved a maiden of Austrian birth whose surpassing charms had attracted the attention of a gay young libertine, a member of the Venetian nobility. The young nobleman was sent on a diplomatic mission to Vienna, and, during his absence, the gondolier married the girl and they became the happy parents of two beautiful children. The nobleman returned. Filled with rage at the escape of the girl, he declared the wife was an illegitimate child—she found friends to protect her good name—her father and mother were brought from Austria and the wicked charge was disproved. But the Devil helped the nobleman, for the fact came out during the trial that the man and wife were in truth brother and sister."

"Horrible!" cried Miss Kent, and she raised her hands as though to push away an ugly phantom.

"The idiotic Frenchman closed the story in true French style. The young man went home with his father, the State took the children, and the nobleman took the poor woman who was a wife and yet no wife."

"Would Shakespeare have ended it in a manner more true to nature?" asked the lady.

"No, untrue," cried Burr, "and that would have made the story deathless. A father and mother guilty, but yet guiltless, would have killed their children and then died in each other's arms!"

"And would the public applaud that, Colonel Burr? I have heard they do not like such tragic takings-off."

"Applause can be obtained for anything. In every theatre in Europe that I visited, they have a parcel of

rascals hired to applaud everything, and they are paid extra for tears and lamentations."

His fair visitor proceeded in her questioning:

"What displeased you most while in Europe?"

"The servants. My valet in Sweden was of no earthly use to me. He got drunk before dinner."

The lady arose to go. Burr opened the door and bowed as gallantly as if it had been the exit of a queen. On the threshold, the lady stopped, suddenly, "Why, I am ashamed of myself! How is Theodosia?"

Burr replied: "I am expecting a letter every minute. My servant has gone to the post-office. If you will honor me with a call later this afternoon or to-morrow, I shall be happy to give you the latest intelligence."

"Thank you," said Miss Kent.

Burr bowed low over the little hand that was extended to him and pressed his lips to the gloved fingers. The door closed upon her. She had been one of the lovely girls whose presence at the dinners, receptions, and musical and literary entertainments at Richmond Hill had so greatly contributed to their success; for wherever beauty congregates it will be followed in time by wealth, fashion, and intellect.

As Burr once more seated himself before his desk, he thought: "What a power the voice and smile of a pretty woman have to drive away melancholy and make one cling to life. When Theodosia and her boy are with me again, I can laugh at fate and pity my enemies. Ah! I must borrow the money to pay that claim of Graham's."

"Here 'tis, Massa Burr," cried Ransome as he entered, holding a letter aloft in his hand.

In an instant Burr had taken possession of it. "It is from Theodosia; it is her writing. Sit down, Ransome, while I read my letter. Now I shall hear from Theodosia and Gamp."

Burr opened the letter and, with an eager glance, began to peruse it. He had read a few lines when the smile died out of his face and a look of agony took its place. Ransome had kept his eyes fixed upon the reader and, when he saw the change in his expression, he asked:

"Bad news, Massa?"

"Yes," said Burr, slowly, "bad news and good news. My darling boy, my namesake—my Gamp—our Gamp, is dead. Poor Theodosia! how lonely she will be."

Ransome's honest old black face showed his sorrow:

"Poor Gamp! We had such nice times together. He always stood up for Uncle Ransome—yes, Massa, he called me Uncle. But the good news, Massa?"

"The good news, Ransome, is that my daughter is coming to New York to see her father after a separation of almost five years."

Again the office door was thrown open; this time to admit the man who was united by the closest bonds to Burr—his son-in-law, Joseph Alston.

"Joseph!"

"Father!"

The two men embraced each other and stood silent for several minutes. Ransome went on tiptoe into the private office and closed the door. Then his own feelings gave way. "Poor Gamp!" he cried a dozen times as the tears fell from his great honest eyes.

Burr broke the silence: "Our boy is gone."

"Yes," cried Alston, "and Theodosia, judging from her letter, is almost distracted. I would return at once but I have been commissioned as a brigadier-general in the army and I must assume my duties immediately. I have written her stating the case plainly. I know what her answer will be. She will tell me to do my duty. He died three weeks ago and, of course, has been buried

long ere this. Nothing could have induced me to leave home had I imagined the end was so near."

"You could not foresee it," interposed Burr. "You are not to blame. But she is coming North at once. With all her physical weakness, Joseph, she is a strong woman both in mind and heart. I have been her teacher and can estimate her fortitude better than anyone else."

"Yes, she is her father's daughter," assented Alston. "She writes me that she is coming by boat as she could not undergo the fatigue of land travel during the winter season and in her present low spirits."

The two men moved towards the open fireplace and, unconsciously, both looked up at the same time. Their eyes fell upon the picture of Theodosia.

"With what joy," cried Burr, "shall I clasp her in these arms again! During these long, weary years, Joseph, Vanderlyn's picture of Theodosia has been my companion, my joy, my solace. Do you know, when in Sweden I took it to Breda, the great Swedish painter, for renovation. When traveling, I rolled it up, but I did not know enough to roll the painted side out. In contrast with Breda's bright coloring, Theodosia's picture seemed faded—and that impression has almost made me superstitious."

"Dismiss the foolish fancy. We have suffered but Theodosia is left to us. She will remain here for the winter and you will be so happy."

"What vessel did she sail on?" asked Burr. "She does not say in her letter to me."

"The 'Patriot,'" replied Alston.

A heavy tread was heard ascending the stairs and Van Ness, who had agreed to return, entered the room.

"Well, Alston, glad to see you. How are you? How is your wife and little Gamp?"

Alston, unable to speak, turned away.

"Van Ness, Gamp is dead, and my bereaved daugh-

ter is on her way to New York. We are going to the wharf to see if there are any tidings. Come with us."

Burr had noticed Ransome's retreat into the private office. He opened the door and called him. "If anyone asks for me, Ransome, I shall be back in a short time. We are going to the wharf to see if we can obtain any tidings about the 'Patriot.'"

When Ransome was left alone his thoughts reverted again to the little boy who had been his almost constant companion for so many years. "Poor Gamp; he called me Uncle Ransome. We used to go ridin' together, and fishin', and he never said a cross word to me in all his life."

Here he would undoubtedly have given way to another burst of grief had not a sharp knock been heard upon the office door. Ransome opened the door and started back in astonishment.

"Good Lor' preserve us!" cried he, "Massa and Missus Blennerhassett. Why I haven't laid eyes on you since I went to Souf Car'lina five years ago."

Mr. Blennerhassett's steps were slow and feeble. Mrs. Blennerhassett led her husband to the sofa and took a seat beside him. Then she spoke:

"We have been through much suffering and many privations since we last met, Ransome."

"So has Massa Burr."

"I am glad to hear it," she replied.

"Hush! Margaret," cried her husband.

Ransome felt that he must impart the sad news that had just been received. "Miss Theodosy's boy, little Gamp, is dead. The news jess come this very minute."

"Harman, he is bowed beneath a great affliction. Perhaps in his own distress he will be mindful of the miseries of others. Will he return soon?"

"He tole me to tell anybody that asked for him that he would be back in a few minutes," Ransome replied.

"Margaret, I dread this interview. I am so weak.

I wish the time for meeting him was not so soon and so sudden as it will be."

Ransome opened the door of the private office. "Come in here and rest yourself, Massa Blennerhassett. I won't tell him you're here, till you're ready." Ransome assisted Mr. Blennerhassett to rise and all three entered the private office, a capacious and comfortable armchair being allotted to Mr. Blennerhassett.

"And your mother, Ransome, did you see her as you expected to when you left us?"

"Bless you, Massa, yes—and Massa Alston bought her and we lived together until a year ago when she died in these arms."

Blennerhassett extended his hand to Ransome, which his old servant took. "You were always a good boy, Ransome."

When Ransome closed the door of the private office, leaving his old master and mistress together, Burr entered. "Has she come, Massa?" cried Ransome.

Burr threw himself into his armchair. "No, Ransome, no tidings. The boat is a week overdue, but there have been heavy storms on the North Carolina coast—and—there is still hope. Mr. Van Ness and my son are at the wharf now." Burr covered his eyes with his hand and sat as if in deep thought. Ransome stood regarding him. Suddenly he remembered something that for the time being he had forgotten.

"Massa Burr!" he cried, "Massa Burr! Massa Burr! Massa Burr!!" cried Ransome again, his voice rising higher with each repetition of the name.

Burr dropped his hand. Ransome, in a mysterious way, pointed towards the door of the private office. Burr jumped up excitedly.

"In there?" he cried, "what! Theodosia? Why didn't you tell me before?"

Burr started towards the private office, Ransome following him wringing his hands in despair for he realized

that Burr had entirely misunderstood him. Burr threw open the door.

"Theodosia! Theodosia!! come to your father!" Mrs. Blennerhassett stood before him.

Burr made an involuntary step backward: "Good God! Margaret Blennerhassett! you here?"

"Yes, Colonel Burr, we intrude upon your privacy as you once did upon ours. Your unwelcome guests are Harman Blennerhassett and his wife, Margaret—your victims."

"You find me suffering from a domestic affliction."

"And you find us both suffering from a domestic affliction," replied Mrs. Blennerhassett. "There is, then, a partnership in misery between us."

"We once contemplated a more pleasant partnership," remarked Burr.

"Yes, and why did you seek it?" cried Mrs. Blennerhassett. "Why did you ever enter our innocent, happy home? Why did not the flowers wither at your approach? Shall I tell you why you came as a destroyer and turned our Paradise into a Hell? Because your mind was tortured with remorse for the unfortunate duel with Hamilton—because you were sickened by disappointment in political preferment—because you were disgusted with President Jefferson's just and pacific policy with all nations. It was for these reasons that you sought to bury the disquietudes that were tearing your soul, by plunging into deeds of such wonderful magnitude." Burr regarded the speaker with unmoved features but said nothing. The lady continued: "You knew full well the advantages which wealth and influence would add to your undertakings and so you sought first to secure the co-operation of the most conspicuous characters at that time living in the West. My husband was a shining treasure, too valuable to remain unnoticed. His wealth, his acquirements, his influence, all convinced you that he

would be a powerful auxiliary to your schemes. Like the serpent in Eden, you wound yourself into the open and unpractised heart of my unfortunate husband and craftily, by degrees, infused into it the poison of your own ambition."

"Madam, do not mistake my silence for self-conviction or remorse. Naturally, as a wife should, you have a good opinion of your husband. Love, and not reason, guides your judgment. Your husband was never a bad man—he was always a weak one. A man of some knowledge and but little common sense. He required no persuasion to enter into my Southwestern scheme. Both of you were eager to embark in it the moment it was mentioned. Did I profit by his wealth? Have I not lost all, as well as you? Do you doubt if I had profited by your aid that I should not have in good faith, like a man of honor, made such money reparation as lay in my power?"

Blennerhassett, who had until this moment remained silent during the interview, now rose to his feet with much difficulty and looked fixedly at Burr.

"Do you ask me that question, Colonel Burr? If so, I will answer that I have long since ceased to consider any reference to your honor, resources, or good faith in any other light than as a scandal to any man uttering it—unless he has sunk as low as yourself."

"Did I not repay some of the money—all that I could secure? Did you not write such insulting letters to my son-in-law that my daughter became convinced it was an audacious swindling trick, and called you a low-bred coward? Who is this Blennerhassett that holds a daughter accountable for her father's misfortunes?"

"Who is Blennerhassett? Look at me and answer your own question. Who was Blennerhassett? Memories of the happy past will aid me to answer that. I was a native of Ireland, a man of letters, to whom war was distasteful—and who fled from the storms of his

own country to find quiet in this. I sought the solitude of the western forests. I built a home, yes, a palace. With my library, my philosophical researches, the delights of music, a beautiful wife and loving children I was happy. In you, the destroyer came! The dignity of your demeanor, your seductive conversation and fascinating address, made my conquest easy. In a short time, my whole nature was changed—every former object was relinquished. Visions of diadems, titles of nobility, stories of great heroes and conquests, took the place of the innocent faces of my children and the smiles of my wife. The end came—the visions disappeared; my house was burned, my wife, driven from its shelter, shivered at night on the banks of the Ohio—my island became a wilderness again. Was ever the power of the tempter more plainly shown? Was ever ruin more complete? Aaron Burr, shrink not from your work! forget not that you have ruined me in fortune, character, and happiness, forever."

Blennerhassett was overcome by the exertion he had made and fell back exhausted into his chair. Burr left the room without another word. Ransome was in the main office.

"Your master needs your services." Ransome was soon at the side of his mistress, aiding her in her ministrations to the invalid. Burr rushed to meet Alston and Van Ness as they entered.

"Has she come?"

Alston did not reply. He turned to Van Ness: "Speak, Van Ness, I cannot?"

Burr grasped Van Ness by the hand and looked anxiously into his face.

"Calm yourself, Burr, there may yet be hope, but they fear that the vessel is lost with all on board." Burr looked fixedly at Van Ness. "Would to God, Burr, that I could offer you some consolation."

For a moment Burr did not speak. His active mind,

however, was at work. It was considering other circumstances connected with the situation. While he stood thus, apparently irresolute, Blennerhassett entered the room supported by his wife and Ransome. They were unknown to Van Ness but were recognized by Alston. Burr found speech at last.

"Consolation for me? I do not need it. I always accept the inevitable without repining. I was thinking of her. What a fate, poor thing."

"Do not lose all hope," said Alston, "I have not. There is a possibility, they say, that the vessel may have been captured by pirates—and Theodosia may be in prison."

"No!" cried Burr, with an intensity that startled his hearers: "an idle hope! She is indeed dead. She perished in a storm in that miserable little boat. Were she alive, all the prisons in the world could not keep her from her father." He turned towards the portrait of his daughter and, as he did so, evidences were plainly apparent of the mental suffering he was undergoing despite his previous assertion that he would not repine. "From this day forth the world is a blank to me and life has lost its value." He dropped upon his knees before the picture. "By this blow, I am severed from the human race!"

Mrs. Blennerhassett turned to her husband and said: "A terrible retribution."

He replied, in a low voice: "From the hand of Heaven! Let us go, Margaret."

CHAPTER XXX

AN OLD SLAVE'S DEVOTION

"WE had better take him at once to his lodgings," Van Ness whispered in Alston's ear. Suiting the action to the word, he descended swiftly to the street. Fortunately, a conveyance was near at hand, and, in a few moments, Burr and Alston were seated therein. Van Ness asked Burr for the key and was returning to lock the office door when he met Mr. Blennerhassett, assisted by his wife and Ransome descending the stairs. He made way for them, supposing the invalid gentleman to be some old soldier of the Revolution who had applied to Burr for assistance. He looked about the offices to see if they were in proper condition to be left for the night. On Burr's desk he saw the packet he had given him but which remained where he had placed it. He put it in his pocket, locked the door, joined his companions, and the carriage drove off.

A short time after its departure, Graham returned and rapped at the office door. There was no response. Then he pounded vigorously; there was no reply. "Just as I expected," he muttered, as he descended the stairs. "Burr never meant to pay me. He promised it simply to get rid of me. But I will go down to his house at once and arrest him. I won't stand any fooling."

A lady who had been standing at the foot of the stairs, waiting for him to descend, had overheard his words. As Graham reached the landing she inquired politely:

"May I ask whom it is your intention to arrest?"

"There's no secret about it," replied Graham, gruffly. "I have a writ against Colonel Burr for forty-one dollars. I was here a couple of hours ago and he promised that I should have the money by this time, but the door is locked. I suppose he is gone home, so I am going to his house to arrest him."

"Have you heard of the two great misfortunes that have befallen him, probably since you last saw him? I have just heard of them myself."

"I have nothing to do with his misfortunes," replied Graham. "It is my duty, as an officer of the law, to get this money or get his body. Of course, it don't make much difference to me, personally, which I get."

"But," persisted the lady, "won't you postpone your visit to him until to-morrow, at least?"

Graham made a gesture of dissent.

"Not when I tell you," continued the lady, "that he has just received news of the death of his little grandson, and that it is feared that the vessel upon which his daughter sailed for New York has either been lost in a storm or captured by pirates?"

"That don't make any difference to me," Graham responded. "It isn't my fault that all his troubles came in one day."

"How much did you say the bill was?" the lady inquired.

"Forty-one dollars and thirty-eight cents, including the costs of court."

"I will go with you and settle the claim," the lady remarked.

An hour later, Miss Emily Kent stood in her boudoir. She held a receipted bill in her hand. "I shall never miss the money," she exclaimed. "We were always such good friends and I enjoyed his company so much. He is the finest gentleman I ever knew. It would have been too cruel to have had him taken to jail. But he

shall never know who paid the bill. I would not give them my name."

Mr. Blennerhassett, assisted by his wife and Ransome, returned slowly to the humble lodgings which had been engaged for their short stay in New York. Ransome was overjoyed at the opportunity thus afforded him to be of service to his old master.

"Massa Burr won't need me now," he said. "I will stay with you and Missus and wait on you both jess as I used to do."

"I am afraid we cannot afford the luxury of a servant," said Mrs. Blennerhassett. "We have barely enough to support ourselves in the most economical manner. I will tell you the whole truth, Ransome. The fact is, I have a little money put by. It is in bank-stock but the income is very small. I am going to Canada with my children because I can live there comfortably for much less money than I can here. My husband wishes very much to go to Ireland. There is a large sum due him there, but he must go to law in order to obtain it. Unfortunately, I cannot spare him any money to pay his passage. If I sell part of my bank-stock, the remainder will not give me enough income to support myself and children. I am at my wits' end, Ransome. We had expected to get some money from Colonel Burr but we see that that prospect is hopeless."

Ransome scratched his old white head vigorously. An idea seemed to have occurred to him but he, apparently, was not disposed to confide what was in his mind to either his master or mistress.

"I will come and see you to-morrow morning," he said, as he took his departure.

Despite Burr's protestation that he always accepted the inevitable with calmness, the fact was that he was nearly prostrated by the double blow that he had received. He had been placed upon a couch in his sitting-room. His son-in-law and his tried and trusty friend,

Van Ness, remained with him until the next morning. Shortly after midnight, his grief apparently subsided and he fell into a troubled sleep. The watchers sat anxiously by the couch upon which he reposed. When he awoke he saw the two friends and, with his old politeness, thanked them for their kind attention. He arose from the couch and shook hands with both of them. Then he said, as a sad smile lighted up his features:

"I have had a dream. My poor Theodosia is at rest." The faces of his hearers betrayed their curiosity. "She is dead! She was buried at sea. In my dream, I saw them place her in her canvas shroud. My poor Theodosia! She was more beautiful than ever. Then the canvas was drawn over her face and one of the men sewed it down securely. Then I saw them take her body, tenderly, and it was lowered slowly and carefully until it reached the water. Then I saw the waves of the ocean close over all that remained of my lost darling. But she is at rest, and I will repine no more."

The next morning, an entirely unexpected occurrence took place at the Blennerhassett lodgings. At ten o'clock Ransome re-appeared but this time he was not alone. He was accompanied by a rather hard-featured looking man, evidently a trader of some sort.

"This is Mr. Van Wagoner," said Ransome, by way of introduction; "Massa and Missus Blennerhassett," he added, to complete it.

Mr. Van Wagoner addressed himself to Mr. Blennerhassett: "Is this your man?" pointing to Ransome.

"My man? What do you mean? I don't understand you," replied Blennerhassett.

"He says he is your slave," said Van Wagoner. "Does he tell the truth?"

"He was my servant. My servants were really slaves, of course, but I never called them so nor treated them as such."

"Please come to the point, Mr. Blennerhassett," said Van Wagoner, rather impatiently. "He is either your slave or he isn't. Did you buy him?"

"I did," assented Blennerhassett. "I bought him in New York before I went West."

"Did you ever give him his freedom, legally, I mean?" inquired Van Wagoner.

"It amounts to the same thing," replied Blennerhassett. "I never intended to make any further claim upon his services."

"No it don't, Massa," cried Ransome. "You can't give a nigger his freedom any such way as that; Mr. Van Wagoner tole me so."

"Well," said Van Wagoner, "I imagine I have got the truth of the matter at last. This man Ransome is your property and you have a right to sell him to anyone who wishes to buy him."

"But I won't sell him!" exclaimed Blennerhassett. "I know, to my disgrace, that I have purchased flesh and blood; but I never sold any, and I never will."

"Yes you will, Massa," said Ransome. "You'll do it jess to oblige me. They are goin' to have a war, and the fust thing I know they'll have me aboard one of the ships, and they'll make me fight, and I don't want to. Mr. Van Wagoner has found me a good, kind master who owns a big cotton plantation down in ole Alabama, and I want to go with him very much. Now Massa Blennerhassett, don't make me go to war when I want to go back to the ole plantation and die there when my time comes, which may be 'fore long."

Mrs. Blennerhassett understood the devotion of the old negro which had led him to take such a step. She saw that it was best for Ransome to do as he proposed. Those were not the days when negroes, even if they were free, had much chance to earn their living in the northern states, so she took the matter at once from her husband's hands.

"What is your proposition?" she asked, addressing Van Wagoner.

"As your man has told you, I have found him a good master. The man is willing to buy him from me, and I am willing to buy him from you. To please Ransome, I have got the bill of sale, all made out, with me. He said you were in a hurry to leave New York. Of course, the man is pretty old, but I think there's some years' work left in him yet." Ransome drew himself up and tried to look as young as possible. "I am willing," continued Van Wagoner, "to give you two hundred and fifty dollars cash for him."

"You must do it, Massa!" cried Ransome. "Missus said you wanted two hundred dollars to go back to Ireland, and I jess thought out, all by myself, the way it could be done. Please do it, Massa Blennerhassett, for it will be best for all of us."

The trade was consummated; and thus did the generous-hearted old retainer repay the kind act of the master who had allowed him to see his old mother once more and to hold her in his arms when she died.

CHAPTER XXXI

FROM ICY BLASTS TO SUMMER SKIES

THE good ship "Patriot" sailed out of the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, one morning late in the month of December, 1812. It was what was called in those days a packet-ship and carried the mail, freight, and passengers. The freight consisted of barrels of rice and bales of cotton and tobacco. The captain had in his cabin, besides, a number of letters containing money to pay for supplies to be ordered from the city of New York, to which port the vessel was bound. The captain and crew numbered fifteen, the passengers being twelve.

The passengers, with three exceptions, were planters bound North to buy supplies for the use of their families and slaves during the coming winter. The three exceptions were Mrs. Joseph Alston, Peggy, a colored woman who had been her nurse and also that of her only son, and Sam, a young colored boy of about twenty-one years of age.

The accommodations for passengers were not very good and, naturally, the captain's cabin had been set apart for the use of Mrs. Alston who was well known to those on board although she was not personally acquainted with any of them. The captain knew that Mrs. Alston was the wife of a former governor of South Carolina and, of course, had communicated this information to the passengers.

The sky was cloudy; a strong breeze was blowing from the East as the vessel left port, but there were no

indications of a storm and Captain Pointdexter anticipated a speedy run to the port of destination. During the day, however, the clouds became thicker and blacker and about six o'clock the wind shifted to the Northeast and began to blow strongly, giving every indication of an approaching gale.

Mrs. Alston remained on deck, for the captain's cabin seemed close and she was not in the best of health. The loss of her little son had weighed upon her both mentally and physically and there was satisfaction in watching the on-coming of the storm and the rise and fall of the great waves through which the vessel was plunging. By a sudden lurch, Theodosia was thrown violently against the main-hatch and would have fallen if the faithful Sam had not prevented. The captain then approached and advised her to go below. On reaching her cabin, she found that she had sustained quite a severe injury to her left hand for it was badly bruised. It began to swell very soon and her marriage ring was deeply embedded in the flesh and caused her much pain. She sent Sam to inquire if there was a doctor on board; he came back with the information that no physician was taken on such short trips. She was a young woman of great resource, and told Sam to find the ship's carpenter. He soon came, and by the aid of a file the golden circlet which was the emblem of her union with her husband was soon removed. As the carpenter placed it in her left hand, in two pieces, a shudder of apprehension ran through her, although she was not superstitious. It seemed then as if the bond between her and the husband whom she loved was broken forever.

During the night, the storm increased in violence and developed into a fierce northeaster. The little packet labored and plunged through the waves and into the deep troughs made by them. Yet, she held her own manfully, and when morning dawned she was opposite

the coast of North Carolina, and rapidly approaching that most treacherous part of the southern coast, Cape Hatteras. Despite the entreaties of Peggy, her faithful nurse, Theodosia insisted upon going on deck. There, a scene of unsurpassed grandeur met her eyes. The skies were black and the distance to them seemed not half so far as to the blue skies when on land. Giant waves struck the ship and like white, foaming mountains, broke over it. The weather had grown exceedingly cold, and spars and rigging and every article of woodwork about the ship were encased in ice.

Captain Pointdexter was a brave man—up to a certain point. Then his heart failed him and he lost that control of his feelings that marks the man of nerve. But he did what a less prudent man might not have done, and by it he secured the safety, for a time, of his vessel and the human beings that she carried. Making a wide détour towards the East, he altered the course of his ship and, instead of attempting the almost hopeless task of beating forward in the face of the wind, he was soon running South before it.

Then a miraculous change took place. The weather which had been so cold, grew much warmer, the ice melted quickly, and little streamlets of water came down from all parts of the spars and rigging. The vessel had struck the Gulf Stream and, although the little packet was driven forward by the strong northeaster, serious danger seemed, for the time, to be averted.

Then the over-worked crew and the frightened passengers took the offered opportunity for rest. Theodosia retired to her cabin where her slumbers were watched over by the faithful Peggy, while Sam, outside the cabin door, slept with one eye open so that he might be on hand if his beloved mistress should need his services.

When Theodosia awoke in the morning, Peggy greeted her with loud exclamations of delight. The

storm was gone and the sun shone. Theodosia soon arose and then saw that what Peggy had told her was true. The sun was shining brightly and, although the little packet gave strong evidence of the severe trial through which she had just passed, the captain had a smiling face and said they would soon alter their course and endeavor once more to reach their destination; but this could not be done until noon, for he wished to learn his position exactly, by an observation, before changing his course.

A man was on the lookout, for the captain thought they might have been driven so far South that they might soon sight land, and the first land that he would see would be the island of Cuba. The vessel was brought about, its bow pointed towards the North, and all hearts were joyful that they had escaped from death at sea and were likely to complete their journey in safety.

Suddenly there came the cry "Sail Ahoy!" and every eye was strained in the direction indicated by the lookout.

"What flag does she fly?" cried the captain.

"There is no flag," answered the man.

"That looks suspicious," remarked the captain to Theodosia who stood beside him watching the on-coming of the stranger. At that moment, there was a flash, a dull report, and smoke was seen rising above the deck of the stranger.

"We are in for it." said the captain. "It is probably a British vessel and we are likely to be captured; but that is better than falling into the hands of the pirates."

"Are there pirates in these waters?" asked Theodosia.

"Why, my good lady," replied the captain, "the sea is full of them. They are as common as thieves in a big city. But they are not such bad fellows, after

all, with one exception. There is one bloodthirsty devil whom I have heard about who makes every one he captures walk the plank; then he scuttles the ship and no one is left to tell the tale or bear evidence against him."

"She's a pirate!" yelled the man from the top, "she's hoisted the black flag."

"Is it all black?" cried the captain.

"I can't make out, yet," said the man.

"What difference does that make?" asked Theodosia.

"This devil of whom I spoke," remarked the captain, "is a Captain Thaddeus. I don't know his last name. On his black flag there is a blood-red T. He is not afraid to let everyone know he is coming."

"I can see the flag, now," cried the lookout, "and there is a big red T on it!"

"Then the Lord help us," groaned the captain. "The 'Patriot' isn't a fast sailor and I don't think there's much chance of getting away from them. We may as well surrender now and meet our fate as to make any resistance."

"If we are to die," said Theodosia, "it will make death a little sweeter if we use every possible expedient to save our lives. Our fate can surely be no worse. They are still some distance off. Why not turn the vessel about once more and at least make an effort to escape?"

This remark was greeted with signs of approval by the passengers who had gathered about and had listened to the conversation between Theodosia and the captain.

"Well," said the captain, who had passed beyond the point of bravery and who now if not a cringing coward was the next thing to it, "we will do the best we can, but it will not help us."

He gave the necessary orders. The "Patriot" was soon turned about and once more headed towards the

South. All sail was hoisted and for a while it seemed as if there were a chance for escape. But no! The pirate craft, painted black and flying its black flag with the blood-red T thereon, was rapidly gaining on them. Soon a cannon ball came through the air. It was well aimed and struck one of the masts of the vessel and, in its course, killed two of the ship's crew.

"It's of no use," cried the captain, "we may as well come to, haul down our flag, and surrender."

"Don't haul down the flag!" cried Theodosia, "if we are to die, let it be with the flag still flying over us. If they wish to take it down let them go aloft and do it."

This patriotic remark was greeted with cheers by the members of the crew and passengers. They seemed to recognize in Theodosia a woman of nerve, spirit, and intelligence. One passenger remarked to another: "I wish to Heaven she was the captain of the ship."

The captain's orders were obeyed so far as coming to was concerned and, in a short time, the "Patriot" was drifting idly. The pirate ship also stopped in its course. What did it mean? They were soon to learn. Four boats, each filled with men, set off from the pirate, and were rowed rapidly towards the "Patriot."

"The cutthroats are coming," cried the captain, "and they will give us no quarter. Say your prayers, for they will not give you time when they are once on board."

"But," cried Theodosia, "are we to make no resistance? Are we to stand here and allow ourselves to be taken or killed without one word of remonstrance? Are we to make no effort whatever to save our lives?"

"It will do no good," answered the captain. "What can we do against sixty bloodthirsty pirates; each one of those boats has fifteen men in it."

"But you have a cannon mounted there!" exclaimed

Theodosia, and she pointed to the stern of the boat. "Have you any ammunition?"

"Yes," answered the captain, "the carpenter knows where it is. But what's the use? Everyone of us is sure to meet death at their hands."

"But," said Theodosia, "we can die but once, and they can do no more than kill us if we kill some of them."

Then she cried: "Gentlemen, arm yourselves with whatever weapons you can find. Where is the carpenter?" He stepped forward. "We will do what we can," she said, "to defend ourselves."

The small cannon was soon loaded and primed. "Does anyone know how to fire it?" asked Theodosia.

"No," said the captain, "we never fire it except on Fourth of July and then I always hire an extra man to take charge of it."

"Then I will fire it!" cried Theodosia. With the assistance of the carpenter and one of the passengers, the gun was sighted, Theodosia touched it off and, as luck would have it, the aim was good. The ball struck the forward boat, tearing through it in such a way that it soon filled with water and the pirates were obliged to jump from it helter-skelter. They were soon picked up by the other boats which kept on their way towards the ship.

"I told you it would do no good," said the weak-kneed captain.

"It has surely done no harm," answered Theodosia, "if we are to die anyway. It is the first time I ever fired a cannon and I feel quite proud of my marksmanship."

Soon one of the boats reached the side of the "Patriot" and its occupants, armed with cutlasses and pistols, came clambering over the bulwarks. Then a hand-to-hand fight ensued. Of course, the issue can easily be

divined. The passengers and crew were poorly armed and no match for the broad cutlass and the pair of pistols carried by each of their enemies.

As the pirates reached the deck, Theodosia grasped a cutlass. Suddenly, in front of her, the head of a man appeared, his hands grasping the bulwark. Raising the sword aloft, she brought it down on one hand, severing it from his body. With a yell of rage, he let go his hold with the other hand and fell back into the water.

At that moment, a strong arm was thrown about Theodosia's slight form, and she felt as if she would be crushed in that giant grasp. The cutlass was wrested from her hand and thrown upon the deck. Then a strange scene occurred. Peggy and Sam had held aloof from the fight, but, on seeing their mistress attacked, they rushed forward. Sam grasped the pirate about the neck with both hands, choking him with all the strength that he possessed. Peggy was like a savage animal. She set her teeth into the man's arm, which was bare to the elbow, time and time again, causing him to yell with pain. Some of his comrades, seeing their leader in such a predicament, came to his assistance. It was the work of but a moment, and when Theodosia turned and gazed into the brutal faces of her assailants her eyes fell upon the prostrate bodies of the faithful servants who lay weltering in their blood.

The pirate thus rescued, picked up the cutlass that he had torn from Theodosia's grasp. She faced him proudly, although, the next moment, she expected to meet her death at his hand. But no; he was evidently the leader of the party and, at his command, the work of slaughter ceased. While one boat had come up on the side where Theodosia had taken her stand, the other two boats had gone to the other side of the ship and thus the passengers had found themselves between two fires. Of the twenty-four men, including passengers

and crew, but nine were living; four passengers and five of the crew. Theodosia was the tenth survivor.

By command of the pirate leader, friend and foe, crew and passengers and pirates who had fallen in the fray, were unceremoniously thrown over the ship's side into the water, after their money, valuables, and the best of their clothing had been appropriated by the pirates.

Then the survivors of the "Patriot" were bound, their hands being tied behind them with strong cords. The leader of the party came towards Theodosia with a savage leer upon his face. He grasped her rudely by her hands, pulled them behind her back, and tied them so tightly that the cords cut into her tender flesh. Then he looked into her face with a sardonic smile, but she faced him bravely.

The prisoners were taken into one of the boats and were rowed to the pirate ship. The victors left on the "Patriot" ransacked the vessel fore and aft. The captain's cabin was gone through and all the letters and everything of value that it contained taken. The cargo was of no particular use to the captors. They could not go into port and dispose of rice and cotton and tobacco, so Jules Drebat, the leader of the attacking party, gave orders to scuttle the ship. This was soon done and, while the boats were returning to the pirate ship, the unfortunate craft filled with water and finally plunged beneath the waves to join the innumerable caravan of ships that had preceded it.

CHAPTER XXXII

CAPTAIN THADDEUS

THE ten prisoners from the "Patriot," one by one, reached the deck of the pirate ship, Theodosia being the last. They filed before the captain, who stood upon the quarter-deck, with white faces and downcast heads, all but one; Theodosia did not droop. She was the last of the line and, as it stopped, she was brought into close proximity to the pirate chief; turning, she looked him full in the face, and a remarkable face it was.

He was a tall man, fully six feet in height and built in proportion; a mass of curly hair of a reddish-brown color covered his head; upon his upper lip, a flowing moustache of the same hue, while his full beard was trimmed to a point, giving him the appearance of a cavalier of the olden time. His face was pallid; his eyes were black, with a fire in them that seemed to scintillate; and, as Theodosia looked at them, they brought back memories of another pair of eyes as penetrating and bright but which had never looked upon her except with the love light in them.

Captain Thaddeus spoke, addressing himself to the passenger who stood at the end of the line, farthest from him.

"What is your name?" he asked. He spoke in English. "I speak English," he continued, "because I suppose you have been so busy making money by cheating your neighbors that you never had time to learn French."

"James Gregory," answered the man.

"Who are you?" continued the captain. "Tell me all about yourself."

"I am a planter," answered Gregory. "I live in the interior of South Carolina and I was going North to buy supplies for my plantation."

"Do you own slaves?" asked the captain.

"Yes," answered Gregory. "I own a hundred."

"Well, you would willingly change places with one of your slaves just now, wouldn't you?" laughed the captain. "Drebat, I commit this South Carolina planter to your tender mercies."

Theodosia stood transfixed; she could utter no word; she could only look and take in the horrible scene that followed. Drebat and two of the pirate crew grasped the unfortunate planter; his money and valuables were taken from him and then he was relieved of some of the best of his clothing. A handkerchief, taken from one of his pockets, was tightly tied about his eyes; two pirates seized him, each taking a hand, and walked him rapidly away from his fellows to the side of the ship. Theodosia could not resist looking in the direction they had taken. What was that projecting from the side of the ship? It was a wide plank. When this was reached, the unfortunate man was lifted upon it, bodily, by the pirates and told, with a laugh, to walk right ahead; when he naturally held back, they struck him with their swords. As he reached the end of the plank and felt himself falling, he uttered a loud cry.

For an instant, Theodosia felt as though she could endure it no longer, but she remembered her father's injunctions to bravery and fortitude and she determined that she would not give way, especially before the eyes of that man by whose side she stood.

Following the scream, there was a splash in the water, and James Gregory, planter, of South Carolina,

had met the fate dealt out to all his prisoners by Captain Thaddeus Boncourt of the pirate ship *La Vengeance.*

"Your name," cried Captain Thaddeus to the second in the line, an old gentleman, fully seventy years of age.

"My name," said he, slowly and deliberately, "is Thomas Hutchinson. I am a retired planter going North to visit my son who is established in business in New York City. His mother is dead and he wished me to come and spend my last days with him."

The captain laughed: "Instead of which, you have decided to spend your last days with me."

"Not of my own free will," replied the man. "I have done you no harm. Why should you wreak vengeance upon these poor people here who have never injured you, in fact never heard of you until you captured our little ship? Is it not enough to rob us of our money and our clothing? Why should you wish our lives? What good can it do you to murder us when, if living, we could not harm you?"

"Well spoken," said Captain Thaddeus, "but I object to the word rob, for we do not rob you; we only take those articles for which you have no further use. You ask me why I wish your death. I have never told the story before, but, as there is a lady present," and he turned his glittering eyes upon Theodosia's face, "I will tell the story for her benefit and, of course, you can profit by it. My father was a Frenchman; all good men are Frenchmen; all bad men are English or sons of Englishmen. His name was Achille Boncourt; my mother's name was Marie. I was the oldest of six children, two brothers and three sisters besides myself. My father was a successful farmer and we enjoyed peace and plenty until the English came to deprive us of our liberties. I was twelve years of age when, one night after dark, a young Frenchman came

secretly to our house and asked my father to hide him. He told his story to my father; I never knew what it was. The next farm to ours was owned by an Englishman, named Ventress; my father and he had had some dispute over a fence between the two farms. The matter had been taken before the judge and not only had my father won, but Ventress was obliged to give up quite a piece of his land as it was proven to belong to my father. Then Ventress swore vengeance. When an Englishman is beaten in fair fight he always swears vengeance; that is the only good trait they have, they never give in while they live. This Ventress must have seen the young Frenchman when he came to my father's house and gave word to the English soldiers. I was outside the house when I saw them coming. I ran in and told my father. He said I must take the young man by a secret path that I knew and lead him away from the house. This I did, but what did I find when I returned after taking him to a place of safety? Our little farm-house burned to the ground and beneath its charred timbers the bodies of my father, mother, two little brothers, and three sisters. I should not have known how it had occurred, but, outside the house, I found the dead body of an English soldier and in his heart I found my father's knife. Then I took an oath that whilst I lived every Englishman and everyone who spoke the English tongue who fell within my power should die. I went to sea as soon as I could and joined a pirate ship. I saved my money and when I had enough I bought this ship. It is mine. I own every timber of it. I am its captain. I named it *La Vengeance,* and I have had it to the full, but while I live I shall go on killing Englishmen, and those who speak that cursèd tongue. Now, Drebat, do your duty."

Jules Drebat was nothing loath. One by one, the prisoners were robbed, blindfolded, and then led forward to meet their fate. Theodosia had thought that

this succession of horrors would surely break down her nerves but, to her surprise, she found as her time approached that she grew steadier and steadier mentally, and she looked forward without fear to her coming fate. Finally, she was alone with the pirates.

"What is your name?" asked the captain, as he had of the others.

"Marie Vaillant. *Je suis Française.*"

"She lies!" cried Drebat, "she is not French. When she was on the other ship she spoke English. I heard her."

"What do you say to that, Mam'selle?" asked the captain, turning his glistening eyes upon Theodosia.

"Your friend," she answered, "is evidently not aware that it is possible for a person to know two languages and be able to speak them both as occasion may require."

"That's a good one on you, Jules," cried the captain, with a loud laugh. Supposing she is French, what have you got to say?"

"A good deal," growled the first mate, for Jules Drebat held that post on the pirate ship. "She fired the cannon that sank one of our boats and, curse her, it was she who cut off my brother Manuel's hand, and he fell into the water and was drowned before we could save him."

"That proves she is French," cried the captain, "that shows that one little French girl had more spirit and bravery than a whole crew of Englishmen."

"It shows nothing," again growled Drebat. "According to the rules of this ship, made by you, even if she is French, she has been the death of five of our crew and I demand her life."

Signs of approval came from some of the members of the crew.

"Then it comes to this," said the captain. "I believe the girl is French, and, being French, she is safe.

I honor her for her bravery. You say she is not French, but if she is, that she must die because she is a brave Frenchwoman. Now which one of us is to have his way?"

A fiendish look came upon Drebat's face. "She killed my brother," he snarled, between his teeth, "and I will have her life if I lose my own in taking it." As he said this, he rushed towards Theodosia and, grasping her about the waist, started towards the plank; but he did not go far. With an oath, the captain was upon him, grasping him by the back of the neck and holding him in a vice-like grip. Accordingly, his hold upon Theodosia loosened and she slipped to the deck. Then, if ever, might she have swooned; but no! the Spartan-like heroism that had been planted in her breast by her father's teaching and had been inculcated in all his lessons, stood her in good stead. She turned and looked at the face of her captor. Releasing his hold upon Drebat's neck, the captain pushed him from him.

Then Drebat, in his rage, lost his head. He did that which no man on *La Vengeance* had ever dared to do before; he drew his cutlass and advanced towards Captain Thaddeus with a murderous look in his eye. Quick as lightning, Captain Thaddeus had his cutlass in hand; a few passes, and Drebat was disarmed, his weapon falling heavily upon the deck.

"Drebat!" cried Captain Thaddeus, "you said there must be another victim, and there shall be! You were so very fond of your brother you may go and join him." Without another word, Captain Thaddeus grasped Drebat, ran with him to the bulwarks and threw him into the sea. Then his voice rang out loud and clear: "Haul in the plank! Hoist all sail! Jean Rollin," said he, addressing a thick-set man who stood near him, "you are my first mate. I will appoint a second mate to-morrow. Mam'selle, permit me." With all the grace of a courtier, he extended his arm to Theo-

dosia. As they descended to the cabin, a loud cry was heard near the stern of the ship. Not a head was turned. Not a man looked in the direction from which the sound come. If one had looked, he would have seen Jules Drebat raise his right hand towards Heaven and, if the words could have reached him, he would have heard a curse invoked by the drowning man upon the head of Captain Thaddeus. If the man had looked a moment later, he would have seen nothing, for Jules Drebat had gone to join his brother Manuel.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"TEACH ME TO BE A GOOD MAN"

WHEN Theodosia looked around the cabin to which she had been conducted by Captain Thaddeus, she realized at once that he had given her his own apartment. The shades of night closed in about the ship. A young man, presumably a pirate, but very youthful in appearance, entered the room with a candle. This he placed in a small candelabrum on the side of the cabin, and lighted it. Without a word, he left the room, closing the door behind him. He soon returned bearing a tray containing food and a bottle of wine. Again, without a word, he left the room.

Theodosia could not eat after the experience she had been through; her fortitude seemed to be deserting her; she had escaped the fate of her nine companions but the truth dawned upon her that perhaps she had been reserved for a doom even worse. Still, she felt that she must not give way physically; so seating herself at the table, she managed to swallow a small quantity of food and drink a glass of wine. As the generous liquid coursed through her frame, all her courage seemed to return.

At that moment, there was a light knock upon the door. Theodosia said nothing. The knock was repeated, a little louder. "Come in!" she said, in French. The door was opened and Captain Thaddeus stood before her.

"Pardon me, Mam'selle, for this intrusion. I came

only to inform you that this cabin is at your disposal. In that cabinet you will find paper, pens, and ink;" he pointed to the right of the room. "Here is the key." He passed her a small silver key. "Everything in this cabin is at your disposal, including myself. If you should need anything, ring this bell," and he placed a small silver bell upon the table. "Once more," continued the captain, "I must ask you to pardon this intrusion. I will call upon you again as soon as my duties will permit." With a low bow, Captain Thaddeus retired from the apartment, and Theodosia was left alone.

The majority of women in such a situation would have passed the night in fear and trepidation. Not so with Theodosia. She was exhausted physically and mentally. The captain's bunk was comfortable, and she was not surprised when she awoke to find the morning sunlight streaming through the port-holes. She had not undressed and so it was but a few moments before she had made her simple toilet. Then she sat down to realize, if possible, her situation, and to what it would probably lead. She finally decided that speculation would do no good; she could only deal with events as they took place, and, feeling hungry, she followed the captain's instructions and rang the little silver bell. The young, mild-looking pirate appeared. Theodosia said but one word, "Breakfast." The young man retired, but soon returned with a tempting meal, including a cup of smoking coffee which, from the aroma, Theodosia knew must be the real article without adulteration. She ate a good breakfast and at her summons the dishes were removed. Then she made an examination of the cabin. With the little silver key, she opened the cabinet. What the captain had said was true. There were paper, pens, and ink. She would write, but to whom? What prospect was there, if she wrote a letter, that it would ever be delivered?

Then she remembered her father's injunction that, under all circumstances, she should keep a diary or journal of passing events. She took some of the paper and seating herself at the table wrote, in French, a full description of the sailing of the "Patriot," its escape from the storm, its capture by the pirate ship, and the fearful scenes that had followed.

She replaced the sheets in the cabinet and was about to lock it when something caught her eye. It was a small dagger in a jeweled case. She took it and examined it. The blade was slender but sharp. She replaced it in its case and put it in the bosom of her dress. The time might come when she would need it.

Dinner and supper, and another night's undisturbed sleep followed. It was not until the morning of the second day that Captain Thaddeus again entered the cabin.

During the previous day and the second night, Theodosia had had plenty of time for thought. She had gone over in her mind the whole affair since their departure from Charleston. She had decided upon her course and, having done this, she determined to follow it. Thus, her father had always taught her, proceed not hurriedly but advisedly; and when she had once made up her mind that a certain plan of action was right, to let nothing turn her from it.

As Captain Thaddeus entered the cabin, she arose and stood before him. "Captain Thaddeus," she said, "I wish to make a confession." She spoke in French.

"I do not think," said the captain, with a laugh, "that I am a proper person to be father confessor for a young lady like yourself."

"And yet," said Theodosia, "it is only to you that the confession should and must be made. I never, until day before yesterday, intentionally told and persisted in an untruth; but I did it, as I thought then, for a good purpose; when that purpose is accomplished I

see no reason why you should extend any further protection to me."

"What do you mean?" asked the captain, a look of astonishment showing itself upon his face.

"First, answer me!" said Theodosia. "Tell me, if you can, the name of that young Frenchman who came to your father's house on the night when—"

"I understand," said the captain. "I shall never forget that night. The young man's name, for he told it to me when we parted, after he had reached a place of safety, was Adolphe Arnot."

"I thought so!" cried Theodosia, and a smile illumined her face.

Captain Thaddeus looked at her in astonishment. What woman was this who could smile so sweetly in such a situation.

"I thought so," repeated Theodosia, "and, on my knees, I thank you for your kindness to my father."

"Your father!" said Captain Thaddeus, "what do you mean? I have never seen your father."

"Yes, you have," said Theodosia, "although you did not know him. The young man who gave you the name of Adolphe Arnot was not a Frenchman. He was English born but rebelled against British rule; when he claimed shelter at your father's house he was on his way from General Arnold, at Quebec, bearing dispatches to General Montgomery at Montreal. His name was not Arnot. His real name was Aaron Burr. I am not French! I am that young man's daughter and only child; my name is Theodosia Burr. When you told your story, it flashed upon my mind that this young Frenchman must have been my father. I said that I was French, but my object was to do what I have done—to thank you for your kindness to my father; for, in having that father, I have enjoyed the greatest blessing that was ever vouchsafed to human being. Now that I have thanked you and you know the truth,

there is no reason why the oath that you have made to your followers should not be kept. I am ready to meet my fate!" As she said this, she faced him proudly. The captain deliberated: "I will think the matter over. You have done right to tell me the truth. I will see you again in a few days and give you my decision." He fixed his eyes upon her; to Theodosia it seemed as if that glance pierced her through and through, but she did not bow her head nor cast down her eyes. With all the grace of a courtier, Captain Thaddeus bowed, and she was again alone.

Each day, she made entries in her journal, still using the French language. One morning there was great excitement on deck. She knew from what she heard, for she did not see, that another vessel had been captured. She threw herself upon her face in her berth and remained there until all was over. Once, she took the little jeweled dagger from its sheath, touched its point with her finger, and even pressed the flesh above her heart. No! She would never kill herself. She would meet death bravely when it came, but never by her own hand.

Several more days passed and still no visit from Captain Thaddeus. Was she to be held as a prisoner? What would be his decision? She was soon to learn and be greatly surprised thereat.

One morning, the same light knock came at the door. Again, at her bidding, the captain entered. "May I be seated," he asked, in a pleasant tone, and in French.

"Certainly, sir, this is your own cabin."

"Not so, Mam'selle. Did I not say it was yours? Who is there on this vessel to contest my word now that Jules Drebat is no longer with us?"

Theodosia did not reply.

"What have you been doing since I last saw you?" asked the captain.

"Awaiting your sentence," answered Theodosia. "Whatever it may be, I am prepared to meet it."

"If you are not a Frenchwoman," said Captain Thaddeus, with a look of admiration in his face, "I think you ought to be. I have come to a decision."

"And it is?" cried Theodosia, as she rose to her feet and looked up into his face.

"I have decided," said Captain Thaddeus, "that I cannot allow you to meet the fate that befell your fellow-passengers. It is the rule of the ship, I know, but I made the rules and I can set them aside; of course, with the consent of my followers. If they object to my decision, I shall have to fight them all and the chances are that they would win—in the end."

"Have you asked them?"

"Not yet," said the captain.

"But why," asked Theodosia, "why should you set aside your rules in my favor? What have I done that I should be favored? M. Drebat told you truly, it was I who fired the cannon; it was I who killed, or caused the death of his brother; and I will tell you what he did not know, that it was I who induced the passengers to resist you in the first place. Now what reason can there be why the same fate that was accorded to my fellow-passengers should not fall to me?"

"Because," said the captain, standing up and looking full into Theodosia's face, "because, and you force me to say it, because, Theodosia," and he spoke her name, for the first time, "I love you and have loved you ever since you stood by my side on the day we met."

At these words, Theodosia recoiled and she involuntarily placed her hand upon the dagger in her bosom to be sure it was there. Yes, the time was fast approaching when she would be forced to use it; perhaps it was now at hand.

"You do not love me," said Captain Thaddeus. "I

did not expect it. I am not so unreasonable, but that does not keep me from loving you."

"No!" cried Theodosia. "You surely could not expect me to love you, knowing what I do of your life and your deeds. The only good thing that I know about you is that you were kind to my father and for that I can forgive you much, but not the cruel deeds, the wanton murders of which you have been the cause. I acknowledge that your sufferings were great, that it was base of the English to kill your parents and your brothers and sisters as they did, but your cup of vengeance is full and running over. No, I could not love you, Captain Thaddeus, but—" and she stopped.

"But what?" asked the Captain. "Supposing I give up my life as a pirate; supposing I repent all my past deeds and promise to do ill no more? If I do this, will you teach me to be a good man?"

Theodosia saw behind this speech and read its hidden purpose. What should she say? Should she bind herself in any way to this man; and, if so, should she ever escape from the thraldom into which she might fall? She closed her eyes. Then she saw a picture of her beloved husband from whom she had been parted so short a time and who was to meet her in New York. Then she thought of that dearly-beloved father from whom she had been separated for so many years and who was now in New York awaiting her coming. Should she refuse to accept the captain's proposal, she knew that she should never see either husband or father again. Her fate might yet be death. Within her bosom she carried that, which, at the last extremity, could save her from dishonor. Opening her eyes and looking up into the captain's face, she said: "If you will give up this life and promise never to return to it I will do what little I can to help you."

He extended his hand but, again, she recoiled. "You ought not to ask me to do that," she said. "I can

never touch your hand nor let your hand touch me while we are on this ship."

"You are right," said the captain. "I will think the matter over and see how it can best be carried out. I will see you again."

Several days had passed and once more Captain Thaddeus was in the little cabin. "I have decided upon my course," said he. "The men have had considerable to say about your presence on the ship. They have not dared to express this openly until yesterday when they deputed the first mate, Rollin, to express their feelings to me. I received him pleasantly, much to his surprise, and told him that I had only been waiting for a convenient opportunity to put you ashore. I have changed the course of the ship and we are now rapidly approaching the coast of Cuba. There is a little harbor or inlet with which I am well acquainted. When once you have entered the little bay you are shaded from outside view so that, after we have landed, it will be sometime before they will suspect that I have left them for good. From time to time, I have turned my share of the booty into letters of credit on Paris. I shall take with me only enough gold for our immediate needs. After landing, we will endeavor to reach some village in Cuba where we will secrete ourselves for a time. This will be absolutely necessary, for they will surely hunt for me. You must keep your name of Marie Vaillant. I will adopt that of Achille Vaillant. I always liked my father's name. I will be—." Theodosia looked up into his face, inquiringly. "I will be your brother, Achille Vaillant, and you will be my sister Marie. I always loved the name Marie for it was my mother's."

The captain rang the little silver bell upon the table and the mild-mannered young pirate appeared. "Bring us a bottle of champagne and glasses," said the captain. When the young man had left the room, the

captain said, "We will drink success to my reformation."

In due time, the wine was opened and the glasses filled. Theodosia merely touched the glass with her lips. "Does that mean that you have but little confidence in the future that you drink so little?"

"No," said Theodosia, "but this must be your last glass of wine while you remain my brother."

"So be it!" cried the captain, and when he had emptied his glass he crushed it in his hand and placed the fragments upon the table. "Thus do I seal my bond," and looking at his hand which had been cut by the broken glass, he added, "with blood! Now, sister Marie, be prepared at any moment to accompany me. I will not stay longer now for it may cause comment and I wish to avoid that as much as possible." Again, a courtly bow and he was gone.

Theodosia sat for some time, busy with her thoughts. The die was cast—she was to accompany this man. How would it end? There was only one course to follow. She must take events as they came and not try to forestall them. Then a thought struck her. Taking a sheet of paper, she wrote a letter in cypher to her father. Removing the dagger from her bosom, she severed a lock of hair and placed it inside the letter. Then she folded and sealed it. There were sealing-wax and a seal in the cabinet and it happened that the seal bore the letter "B." Then she wrote another letter, this in English, and to her husband, Joseph Alston. In it she placed the two broken fragments of her wedding ring. This too, was folded and sealed. Then she took the champagne bottle and opening the port-hole turned the wine into the ocean. Next, she took her journal, or diary, and wrote for some time, adding several closely-written pages, still in French. This she rolled into the smallest compass possible and fastened it at both ends and in the centre with a silken thread

which she drew from her dress. Inserting it in the neck of the bottle she dropped it and it fell to the bottom. By doubling up the letters which she had written she was able to force them through the neck of the bottle until they, too, fell to the bottom. With great exertion, she managed to restore the cork to its original position. Taking up the stick of sealing-wax, she covered the cork so thickly with the wax that the whole was impervious to water. She stamped it with the same seal she had used upon the letters. Then she placed the bottle in the cabinet, locking it with the silver key.

Several days passed during which Theodosia was in a state of anxious suspense. Why did he not come? Had anything happened to him? No, if there had, some member of the crew would surely have come to tell her. He must still be in command.

One evening the sky was thickly overcast and, although it could not be more than four o'clock in the afternoon, it seemed almost as dark as night. The young man brought the candle much earlier than usual. Theodosia had a presentiment that the time had come. All her preparations were made. When she left the "Patriot" she had worn a long cloak and she felt that this garment would be of great service to her in carrying out her plan. Impelled by something, she knew not what, as the darkness increased, she extinguished the candle; then she felt to be sure that the dagger was safe in its hiding-place. The champagne bottle was slipped beneath her cloak. She sat in her chair in the darkness.

Suddenly the door opened and a voice said in a low whisper, "Marie!" She answered, in the same low tone, "Achille!" "Come with me," said the voice.

In a moment they were on deck, and in a moment more they had descended from the ship and were in a small boat that lay at the side of *La Vengeance*. As Theodosia took her seat in the stern of the boat, she spread her cloak out over the water as though adjust-

ing it and, at that moment, dropped the champagne bottle into the water. It, naturally, made a slight plash as it fell, but the outspread cloak deadened the sound and it was not noticed even by the acute ear of the captain.

Taking up the oars, he pulled rapidly in the direction of the little cove. It was quite a distance to the shore and it seemed as though the darkness grew deeper and deeper as they progressed. They were just at the mouth of the little bay, having turned one of the points, when, suddenly, their little boat came into collision with something. Theodosia's first thought was that they had struck a rock or had run ashore, but her attention was immediately aroused by the sound of a voice, and the next moment a lantern was turned towards them, the light flashing into their little boat. With an oath, Captain Thaddeus dropped his oars, jumped to his feet, and, grasping Theodosia about the waist with his left arm, sprang into the water. As he did so, the light from the lantern was turned full upon them and Theodosia saw that their little craft had come into collision with a larger boat filled with sailors. In the bow stood a young man holding the lantern in one hand and a pistol in the other.

"By God!" he cried, "'tis Captain Thaddeus," and his voice rang out loud and clear in the stillness of the night. As he spoke, he pointed his pistol and fired; then drawing his other pistol, he fired again. Both shots took effect. His aim had been true. The first had struck Theodosia in her right side, in fact, had inflicted a severe but not fatal wound; the second had been better aimed, for it entered the heart of Captain Thaddeus and, without a cry, he loosed his hold upon Theodosia and sank beneath the waves.

"Pull, boys! pull!" cried the officer. "There was a woman with him." A few strokes of the oars and the boat was close to Theodosia. The officer had

turned his light upon the water and saw her long hair floating upon the waves. He reached out and, as the boat drew nearer, he leaned over the side and with the help of one of the sailors Theodosia was lifted in. The cloak had fallen from her shoulders while in the water and the dress that she wore was stained with the blood from her wound.

"Now, pull for the ship, boys;" cried the officer. "I hope to Heaven this young woman is not mortally wounded. We'll get her to the surgeon as soon as we can."

The boat was driven rapidly forward by a dozen willing hands in the direction of a British sloop-of-war, riding at anchor in the little bay, whose outlines were dimly seen through the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXIV

LAST DAYS

AS has been stated, Colonel Troup, an old army friend of Colonel Burr, had given him a desk in his office and thus furnished him with an opportunity to begin his law practice once more. Burr did not appear in court. Colonel Troup attended to the court cases while Burr did the office work, assisted the Colonel, and also built up quite a business in the line of conveyancing, making out deeds, wills, and other legal papers. His appearance in court to argue cases would, no doubt, have provoked antagonism on the part of those whose feelings towards him were still bitter. But as he sat quietly in his office and attended to his business, there was no opportunity for a display of such feeling, even if it had existed.

Burr found comfortable lodgings in a quiet street. He had two rooms; one a general reception-room, and the other his study, kitchen, and bedroom. He still clung to his European habit of getting his own breakfast and supper and making his own tea and coffee, although at noon he dropped into a retired tavern or chop-house and made a frugal meal. He was always abstemious, and his living as regards food cost him comparatively little.

As he was often interrupted during the day answering the inquiries of Colonel Troup's clients, he soon adopted the plan of taking much of his work home, and it was done in his study after he had had his supper.

Burr made no attempt to extend his acquaintance,

but he still had many friends in the city who, hearing of his return home, soon manifested their confidence and interest in him by visiting him at his lodgings. They were always received courteously and many pleasant memories were called up during their conversations. Disagreeable subjects, by mutual consent, were avoided, and Burr experienced more real contentment during the last years of his life than he had felt during the tumultuous career which ended on receipt of the news of the loss of the "Patriot." As he had said at that time, with it, perished the last tie that bound him to the human race—meaning, of course, the last tie of blood.

Among those friends who gathered at his lodgings from time to time to pass a quiet evening either in his study or by themselves in the reception-room when he was busy, were Colonel Troup and Luther Martin, the famous Maryland lawyer who had assisted in the impeachment case of Judge Chase before the American Senate in 1805 and who was also one of Burr's counsel at his trial for treason and conspiracy. He had grown too old and too infirm to attend to his business as a lawyer, and Burr, in his kindness of heart, gave him a home and, out of his own meagre earnings, fed and clothed him. He did not eat with Burr, for the latter never enjoyed his meals so well as when he cooked them with his own hands and ate them alone. Martin slept upon a lounge in the sitting or reception room and took his meals at a boarding-house near by.

Another guest was Doctor Hosack, the surgeon present on that memorable eleventh of July at Weehawken Heights when Hamilton fell; but neither Doctor Hosack nor Colonel Burr ever referred to that day or to the events which then took place.

W. P. Van Ness, Burr's second at the duel, was still a resident of New York and his face was often seen at Burr's lodgings. Although older in years, he had lost

but little of that aggressiveness and sternness which had made him so strong a partisan of Burr and had caused him to be so intensely disliked by the Federalists and others of Burr's foes. His bitter enemy, Cheetham, had died about six years after the duel.

Matthew L. Davis, an old friend of Burr who afterwards became his biographer was also a constant visitor. To him, Burr committed all his letters and private papers with one notable exception. What that exception was, it took fifty years and the most remarkable concatenation of events and circumstances to disclose.

One pleasant evening in September, Luther Martin and Doctor Hosack were in Burr's sitting-room engaged in friendly conversation. Colonel Burr was in his study preparing a brief which Colonel Troup was to call for late that evening as he wished to file it in court the next morning. After discussing various subjects, a remark was made by Doctor Hosack which turned the conversation to Colonel Burr's ability as a military leader.

"There can be no doubt," said Doctor Hosack, "in any man's mind, whether he is friend or foe that, so far as personal bravery goes, no man in the Revolutionary army surpassed Colonel Burr. I do not think that Colonel Burr knew what fear was, meaning, by fear, apprehension of any personal injury to himself. You know, of course, Mr. Martin, that I was present when General Hamilton fell. I have never spoken of it to a human being before, but the contrast between those two men as they faced each other on that fatal morning was remarkable. Hamilton showed by the position of his body and the look on his face that he was in mortal terror. I have seen the same look on the faces of many of my patients when they felt that death was near. Colonel Burr stood as firm and unmoved as a rock. No one would have surmised from his face that he was not present at a reception where the next moment he

might be called upon to bow or to extend his hand to some dignitary."

"I have no doubt of it," replied Martin. "Colonel Burr was and is to-day, to a remarkable extent, a man of great will power. I was with him all through his trial at Richmond, and although he knew that the power of the President, joined to the influence of his other enemies, was against him, he stood unmoved—to use your simile, as a rock. Never by word or look did he give any one to understand that he had the slightest doubt as to the favorable result of the trial."

As he said this, there came a tap at the door of the sitting-room and Martin called out, "Come in!" The door was opened and Colonel Troup entered. He was not alone, but approached them leading an elderly gentleman, apparently between seventy and eighty years of age, whose form was bowed.

"Is Colonel Burr in?" asked Colonel Troup. Martin replied in the affirmative and without a word Colonel Troup and his aged companion entered Burr's study.

"Have you any idea who that is?" asked Martin.

"Not the slightest," replied Doctor Hosack. "His face is new to me. I do not believe that he is a New Yorker."

At that moment, Colonel Troup re-entered the room. "I have left them together," he said, with a smile on his face. "I don't suppose you two gentlemen have the remotest idea who it is that is now closeted with Colonel Burr?" Both shook their heads.

"That gentleman," said Colonel Troup, "is Samuel Spring." Both looked up, inquiringly.

"That does not convey any information to you, does it?" he asked. "Well, that is the Reverend Samuel Spring, father of Reverend Gordon Spring—"

"The Episcopal minister?" broke in Martin.

"Yes," said Troup, "he has not seen Colonel Burr

for fifty years, since he parted with him on the morning when General Richard Montgomery was killed during the attack upon the city of Quebec."

Colonel Troup would have told more of the particulars but, at that moment, the study door opened and Colonel Burr entered, the Reverend Mr. Spring leaning upon his arm.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Spring, in an aged and quavering voice, "this is the first time I have seen 'Little Burr'"—and, as he said this, he laid his hand upon Burr's shoulder—"since he was a stripling of nineteen. I was chaplain of the command under General Benedict Arnold, and we all called him 'Little Burr.' I saw him at Montgomery's side when the attack was ordered. I heard the report of the cannon that killed Montgomery. Next, I witnessed the retreat of our demoralized soldiers. I supposed they had all passed me and I had turned to join them, when I saw coming through the falling snow what appeared to be a very tall man. I thought to myself, he is wounded and that accounts for his being so far behind the others. The bullets of the enemy came thick and fast but I determined to wait until the stranger reached me. I did so, and discovered that it was not one man but two; one living, the other dead. What I saw was Little Burr, here, bearing upon his back the body of General Montgomery. We kept on together until we were beyond the reach of the enemy's fire and then the little fellow was obliged to drop his burden, for Montgomery weighed at least twice as much as he did. I made up my mind when I heard Colonel Burr had returned to New York that I would see him once more before I died, and it has made me happy to do so. My good friend, Colonel Troup, offered to accompany me here and to see me home to my son's house." When the old gentleman finished his speech he was led to a comfortable chair by Colonel Burr and Col-

onel Troup. "You will rest a little while," remarked the latter, "before we go back."

"Doctor Hosack and I had been speaking," remarked Martin, "about our friend Burr's military experience. Now I am going to ask Colonel Burr a question, which, perhaps, he will not answer; but I should like to know in what military event with which he was connected he took the greatest pride and pleasure."

"That is easily answered," said Burr, "but, strange as it may seem, my most satisfactory military exploit took place after I had resigned from the army and my resignation had been accepted. I had gone home to Connecticut, suffering from a disease which I had contracted at the battle of Monmouth, and was lying on a sick-bed when news came that my old enemy, Governor Tryon, was approaching the city of New Haven with a large body of British regulars bent on burning and looting the town. I got up and put on my uniform, although I had no official right to wear it, buckled on my sword, and went out to look up recruits. There were quite a number of militiamen in the city but I found it impossible to induce them to follow me and meet the on-coming force of British soldiers. No, they could fight from behind stone walls or breastworks but they were not equal to meeting regular troops in the open. I did not blame them, for I knew that there could be but one result if they did.

"At that moment, I heard that the Yale boys had gathered on the College Green, armed with muskets and rifles, and were eager to be led against the enemy. I mounted a horse and rode to the college. What I had heard was true; the brave young fellows were ready to fight and die for their country and their beloved city. With their aid and that of some of the militiamen, we constructed what, at a distance, must have appeared to be quite a formidable redoubt. Behind this we took our stand. With my force of un-

trained and undisciplined youngsters, I succeeded in keeping the enemy at bay until the citizens were enabled to convey to a place of safety their most valuable possessions. It was such a good joke upon Tryon whom I had met once before under similar circumstances—when he had two thousand men and I only three hundred—that I took especial pleasure in the exploit, and you can understand why I consider it the most satisfactory and creditable of all my military undertakings."

Burr continued to carry on his legal business in the office of Colonel Troup until the latter's death. But now his income from the modest amount of business that he was able to secure was not sufficient to allow him to retain the office formerly occupied by his friend. In fact, everything was sold and turned into money for the benefit of Colonel Troup's family. Burr made attempts to get some other lawyer to take the office and allow him to remain and perform the legal duties which he had done formerly, but he was unable to do so. There was no prominent lawyer in New York City who would associate himself in business with Colonel Aaron Burr. There was no course left him but to give up the idea of having an office and to transact what business he could at his lodgings, using the reception-room, which has been referred to, as his office. For a while, this plan succeeded moderately well, but his lodgings were so far from the centre of business that, one by one, his clients dropped off until only a few remained, the principal one being Justus Dane.

Justus Dane was wealthy. He found it impossible to spend even the income from his money. He was a great admirer of Colonel Burr. Prompted by his regard for him, he had ventured, upon one occasion, to offer Burr what was equivalent to an allowance, that is, to give him, outright, from his income enough for his support. Although Burr was now seventy-seven years of age and rapidly becoming too infirm to per-

form enough legal work to secure him a living, his pride was in no way diminished. In a dignified but firm manner, he refused the proffered assistance; but it was done in so courteous and gentlemanly a way that Mr. Dane could not be offended at the declination. In fact, to show his confidence and esteem for Mr. Dane, he called him into his study and said:

"Mr. Dane, I feel quite sure that I shall not live a great many years longer. This, as you no doubt understand, causes me no misgivings; but, although I may die, I am confident, and I say it without egotism, the name of Aaron Burr will not be forgotten by his countrymen for many years. I cannot hope that they will remember me with affection or regard. That matters little to me. I have made arrangements with my friend, Matthew Davis, to become my biographer. All my private papers, manuscripts, and books will be placed in his hands—with one exception."

Going to a cabinet, he unlocked it and took from a drawer a sealed packet. He passed the same to Mr. Dane. The latter read the superscription: "The property of Aaron Burr. Not to be opened and the contents made public until fifty years have elapsed after my death."

"My biographer," continued Burr, "is not likely to live fifty years longer. You are a young man. In testimony of my esteem for you and confidence in you, I am going to place this packet in your hands. Guard it as you would your own honor, for it contains my vindication before the people of America. I have taken an oath that its contents shall not be made public for fifty years after my death. Hold it in trust for me; provide, in case of your death, that it shall go into the hands of some one equally trustworthy and honorable. When the time has elapsed, the person in whose possession it may be will be at full liberty to open it and disclose its contents."

If Mr. Dane had had any feeling as a result of Colonel Burr's declination of his kind offer of assistance, that feeling was removed by this expression of confidence. He accepted the trust and declared he would be faithful to it.

Several day later, Burr's selected biographer, Mr. Davis, called upon him. Although they were good friends, they very often fell into heated arguments, usually over very small matters. This time, the subject under discussion was the proposed "Life of Burr" to be issued after his death by Mr. Davis. Colonel Burr insisted that he wished this memoir to be devoted principally to his military life. His former prominence in political circles and at the bar was of secondary importance to him. Then the question turned upon the disposition of the vast accumulation of private correspondence.

"I think," said Mr. Davis, "that you ought to destroy your private correspondence yourself. I know as well as you do, that you have hundreds of letters from ladies that, out of regard for the feelings of your correspondents, should not be published. You should not throw upon me the decision of this question after your death. You ought to relieve me from it now by destroying them."

"No!" said Burr, with firmness. "If it were known that I had destroyed these letters and had thus deprived myself of the support that some of them give me, it would let loose upon me in my old age, when I am wholly unfit to engage in controversy of any kind, further vituperation and abuse. A man with a pistol or a sword in his hand is an object of respect, but the moment he is deprived of those weapons he may be insulted or abused with impunity. So it is with me. I do not propose to make any aggressive use of these letters. I have had battles and contests enough in my life but I do not choose to deprive myself of the

weapons they form in my hands. After I am dead, do with them as you will. You know that I would have no use made of them that would impair the reputation or affect the good name of any of my correspondents." Thus the matter was left.

A short time after this, Burr committed, perhaps, the most ignoble act of his life. He was deprived of income. He was unable to work for his support. He had had a paralytic shock and it was inevitable that this would soon be followed by a second and a third. Nevertheless, the fact remains, that, at this advanced age he contracted a marriage with Madame Betty Jumel, the widow of a wealthy French gentleman. His best friends must admit that this marriage was a mercenary one. Perhaps Burr deemed it excusable—for he must live—and, as the widow Jumel was willing to marry him, that may be accepted as his justification. But his wife was averse to the use of her money for speculative purposes and the union was soon dissolved by mutual consent. Burr returned to his humble lodgings once more while Madame Jumel-Burr remained in her mansion.

Burr's means were soon exhausted and he was obliged to give up the comfortable sitting-room and the study in which he had passed so many pleasant years. From the sale of his effects, he realized a small sum and then sought other lodgings. By chance, or, if we may call it so, the decree of Fate, the house at which he first applied was kept by the daughter of a British officer for whom Colonel Burr, during the Revolutionary War, had performed a most humane service. The daughter took him in and gave him a comfortable room. Upon learning that Colonel Burr was an inmate of the boarding-house, the rest of her boarders notified her that if he remained they would leave. The high-spirited woman replied that they could go, that Colonel Burr had been a friend to her father when he was in

distress and she proposed to be a friend to Colonel Burr now that he was in distress, even if every one of them left. None went.

While at this lady's house, he had a second shock and came near death; but, under the kind ministrations and careful nursing of his faithful friend, he partially recovered. But now a new difficulty presented itself to him. The owner of the house occupied by his friend had sold it. The new owner proposed to tear it down and erect upon the land a building for office purposes. The lady decided that she would not again engage in the business and Burr found himself once more obliged to look for shelter—he knew not where. During the last few years, the hand of death had made great havoc among his friends. Luther Martin had passed away years before; so had his true and loyal friend, Van Ness: so, also, had Doctor Hosack. Of all who had met in the pleasant little sitting-room only Matthew Davis remained and he was not in a position to receive Burr and give him the care and attention that he needed. But there was a friend who now felt it was time for him to speak again, and this time he did not speak in vain. Justus Dane called upon Colonel Burr and told him that he had secured pleasant lodgings for him in the house of a certain lady who resided at Port Richmond, on Staten Island. He did not attempt to argue the question; he simply said he had made the arrangements and Burr offered no objection. The Colonel had now passed his eightieth birthday and awaited the third and fatal shock. He was unable to enter a carriage and so was carried upon a litter to a boat and thus conveyed to his new lodgings.

When he arrived, he was taken at once to his room by his attendants. He did not know the name of the lady with whom he lodged. Justus Dane provided a servant to wait upon and watch with him. After he had been located in his new quarters a few days, a clergy-

man of the village, hearing of his condition, called upon him to offer him spiritual consolation. His first question was, "What are your feelings on the subject of religion?" To this, Burr replied, simply, "On that subject I am coy." The conversation was abruptly terminated and the clergyman took his departure.

But a startling discovery and one entirely unexpected was to be made by Burr. He had been in the house fully a week before he was visited by his landlady. This visit would not, probably, have been made then but for the fact that his servant had gone to New York for some articles that he desired. Needing some assistance, he pounded upon the floor with his cane and his summons was answered by the lady of the house. As she entered the room, Burr looked up and at once recognized her. Her name fell from his lips—"Kate!"

"Yes, Kate," said the woman.

"I forgot," said Burr, "excuse my familiarity. I should have said, I presume, Mrs. Clarke."

"No," answered the woman, "I am not Mrs. Clarke. You probably do not know what I told Frederic the day I parted from him at Blennerhassett Island. I have kept my word. I told Frederic Clarke that I would never marry him as long as you lived. I have known of your being in New York. I have often passed your office; I have been by your lodgings many times. I have thought a dozen times that I would call upon you, but I did not. By chance, when I purchased this house, for it is my own, bought with my own money, I happened to speak to the owner, a Mr. Dane, about having the papers drawn up by a lawyer. He said he would attend to the matter; that Mr. Burr transacted all his legal business. What Mr. Burr? I asked. He said, Colonel Aaron Burr. Then I stated that I knew you. I told him how our acquaintance began on that fatal morning on the heights at Weehawken; how I had quarreled with my lover; how we

met at Blennerhassett Island where the quarrel occurred that has kept Frederic and me apart so many years."

"But you love him, Kate?" asked Burr.

"I have always loved him and I know that he loves me as well as ever; but we are both proud."

"You have spoken the truth," said Burr. "I was not worth so much devotion. So far as I was concerned, I would have relieved you from your oath years ago."

"But I would not have let you," said Kate. "I did not make the promise to you. I made it to myself and I should consider it much meaner to break a promise thus made, than if I broke one made to another."

"Good girl!" said Burr, and he extended his hand which she took. Then he continued: "I shall not remain long to stand as a bar between you. My days are numbered. I look forward not with fear, but with joy, to meeting once more my Theodosia and her mother, my little grandson, and Theodosia's husband, and my own dear father and mother, the loss of whose protecting care and advice has cost me so much trouble and misery and suffering in this world."

During that summer, Kate Embleton's attentions to her foster-father were unceasing. Justus Dane's wealth was placed at her disposal. Everything that could add to Burr's comfort was secured. On the fourteenth of September, 1836, the end came suddenly.

Two devoted friends knelt at his bedside. One was Kate, who had been faithful to him in word and deed since that day at Weehawken; the other, Justus Dane. Burr seemed to feel that his last moments had come. He slowly raised his right hand and, with trembling fingers, removed his spectacles. Then he said, in a feeble voice, "Kate." This was understood to mean that he wished her to keep them as a memento. As she gently took them from him, he turned those wonderful eyes, which even the near approach of death could

not dim, towards her with a grateful look in them. Then he closed them forever. But still he breathed. The anxious watchers waited for the breath which was to be the last. Suddenly, a look of ineffable sweetness stole over his face and a whispered word came from his lips. Both heard it distinctly; it was his daughter's name—"Theodosia!" Then, he half raised his hands from the bed as if to extend them in greeting. They fell back like lumps of lead; then, a gray pallor settled upon his face, soon followed by that dreadful premonitory sound that so closely precedes the end.

The soul of Aaron Burr had passed on to the Unknown. The form that it had animated and the brain which it had inspired lay cold and still upon the little cot.

The body was attired in a new suit which Mr. Dane's thoughtfulness had provided. A few hours later, the coffin stood in Kate's parlor. She looked about the room as though in search of something. "What do you miss?" inquired Mr. Dane. "Have we forgotten something?"

Kate did not answer for a moment. "I hope and pray," said she, "that father and daughter will meet and be reunited above; but, yet, it does not seem right that he should be here and her portrait so far away."

Then a picture was taken down and, in a short time, the portrait of the dead Theodosia was hung in its place and looked down upon the face of her father in the coffin beneath.

CHAPTER XXXV

"THE PATHS OF GLORY"

DEATH is rarely a welcome visitor, come when he may or in whatever guise. To some, borne down by physical pain, shame, or remorse, dissolution may furnish a welcome release from present suffering; but, such a death is not the predestined nor logical conclusion of a life, especially if the hand of the sufferer causes the illogical separation. Who can look upon the still beautiful, waxen-like face of a dead child without a feeling of genuine sympathy for the bereaved mother and sorrowing father? Sad it is when youth, fired with emulation and looking forward with feelings of ambition and hope to the future, is stricken down at the threshold of an honorable career. Sadder still, is it, when youth, having completed what is known as education, falls by the roadside before the tutored mind and trained hand have had an opportunity to grasp the realities of life. Is it not pitiful to look upon the face of a young mother sleeping her last sleep, and more pitiful still when we regard her companion whose home has lost its charm, its solace, and its hope? With what feelings of grief do we regard the strong man cut down in the prime of life with plans uncompleted, ambition and hope as yet unrealized. It requires a strong mind to view all this and then, with calm philosophy or the strength that religion gives, to take up arms and plunge once more into the battle of life.

But there is a form in which death comes that is less harrowing It is when we gaze for the last time on

the calm, untroubled face of an aged person. He has had his day. He has fought the good fight. If he has been victorious, then the world has nothing more to give him and it is well that the end has come. If he has been vanquished, then the world has nothing to give him and it is well that the unsuccessful strife has closed.

Thoughts like these ran through Kate Embleton's mind as she stood beside the dead man in her little parlor. A solitary candle still burned upon the mantlepiece and threw a fitful glimmer on the face of the daughter above and that of the father beneath. On the face of the dead man there was a look of supreme peace and contentment.

Kate gazed upon the man she had first seen thirty-two years before when she was a young girl of seventeen. As she stood there, she thought of the many years that she might have passed in happiness if she had not met him. No doubt, instead of being alone in the world as she was to-night, the present time would have found her a happy wife and mother. Then, as she recalled the three interviews that she had had with her lover, all her old pride arose and she said to herself, "I am not sorry that I met him."

As she said this, she bowed her head and the tears trickled through her fingers. Then a slight sound caught her ear. Soneone else must be in the room; someone stood beside her. Who could it be? She could not divine. Perhaps it was Mr. Dane. It was some moments before she summoned courage to look up and ascertain who the newcomer was. When she did so, she started back, astonished. Yes, there he was—Frederic Clarke, her old lover, perhaps her lover still. He was handsomer than ever, although his hair was silvered.

"Kate!" he cried, "now that he is dead is there any further bar between us?"

Kate did not answer. Then Frederic spoke again. "I see. The simple fact of his death is not sufficient. I must own that from the beginning to the end I have been in the wrong. I am willing to do so. I have thought it all over. A hundred times I have decided to come to you and tell you so; but how could I, when the oath that you took that day was ringing in my ears? Now that I own that I was wrong, and now that he is dead, will you forgive me, Kate, and be my wife?"

They stood hand in hand, their hearts at last made one beside the body of the man who had been the cause of their separation; and in the presence of death their long wait was ended.

Word had been sent to Madame Jumel-Burr, but she had signified no intention of being present at the funeral. A small company of friends who were living in the vicinity, however, found their way to Port Richmond and followed the remains to Princeton where they were laid at the feet of his father and mother. If the decree of Fate had been that that father and mother should have lived to guide the feet of their little boy, what a different history might have been written!

About a fortnight afterwards, Frederic and Kate were married. He had sought out the aged clergyman who had joined Burr in wedlock to Mrs. Prevost and, later, strangely enough, to Madame Jumel. Frederic had some good paying property in the West, but Kate did not care to leave her old surroundings for a time, at least, so it was decided to remain at Port Richmond.

When Frederic was away from home she would often steal quietly up-stairs and sit down beside the little cot in what she and her husband called "Burr's Room." Theodosia's portrait had been restored to its former position and as she sat and gazed at it the almost tragic scenes of her fitful life passed before her eyes and she would close them in vain attempts to shut out the regretted pictures. Then, she would start suddenly to

her feet. Surely her foster-father had called her—"Kate!" Then, she could endure it no longer. She would quickly leave the room and by close attention to her housekeeping duties seek forgetfulness of the past.

Seven years had passed away, that magic scope of time in which it is said both man and woman change. From the first, as was natural, the love entertained by Frederic and Kate for each other was more Platonic than passionate; they loved each other's society, and time does not change this kind of love. As an English philosopher has remarked: "No two persons should get married who would not have been good friends if they had remained single."

Frederic still kept up his ardent interest in politics. History and biography were his favorite reading and what he read his wife read also. They read aloud to each other and discussed the questions of the day, together, and with intimate friends.

It was the eleventh of July. Forty years had passed since Burr's hand had fired the fatal shot. Frederic was sixty-one years of age and Kate fifty-seven. The morning was beautiful. A heavy shower the night before had freshly painted the browned turf with vivid green and the blue river smiled and sparkled like the eyes of a laughing child. "We will have an outing on the river to-day, Kate," said Frederic, and she followed his lead without a word. She had read his mind and did not oppose the contemplated trip.

They sat side by side on what seemed to be the same grassy mound. The old tree that stood behind it was gone; but one, of lesser girth, had usurped its place. Thus it is ever: death and the living, life and the dying. The grass and the trees looked as of old. Could it be possible that the leaves had withered and died, and, forty times in succession, had come forth again with new life? What a promise for the future!

It could not be that the same birds were in the trees

but the present choristers sang as merrily as did those of yore.

Husband and wife stood beside the little monument that marked the place where Hamilton fell. "There should be a great monument erected here," cried Kate, "on which should be engraven the names of Burr, Hamilton, Theodosia Burr Alston, Joseph Alston, Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett, and James Wilkinson, for on this spot began the most memorable epoch in American history."

"I should object to only one of those names," remarked Frederic.

"And which?" queried Kate.

"Wilkinson's," said her husband. "I rejoice to think that the remains of a man so false to all the laws of decency and honor do not rest beneath American soil."

"We read his memoirs, you remember," remarked Kate.

"They proved his guilt," cried Frederic. "He was tried for complicity with Burr, but, of course, was exonerated. To have convicted him would have impugned the honor of Burr's enemies and would have been a *quasi* vindication of our friend."

As her husband uttered the last two words, Kate gave him a grateful look; there was no sting left now. They would end their lives in sublime peace. Frederic resumed the subject: "What a fiasco Wilkinson made in the War of 1812. He quarreled with General Wade Hampton, and the finest army that the United States had ever collected retreated without striking a blow, shorn of its glory by the incompetency of its vainglorious and jealous leader."

"But he suffered for it," said Kate; "he died in exile."

"Yes," cried Frederic, "driven from his native land by the force of popular opinion, the irony of Fate landed

him in Mexico—that city on whose palaces he had declared, he would, with Burr's aid, plant the flag of freedom. Burr went into exile, but he came back like a man, met his enemies, and is buried in his native soil. But Wilkinson never dared to face again the honest indignation of his countrymen."

"I don't know so much about the Blennerhassetts," remarked Frederic, musingly. "That day—" then he stopped suddenly.

"I knew them both intimately," said Kate. "I went to Frankfort with Mrs. Blennerhassett and the children after that dreadful fire and she insisted that I should stay with her. I lived with them a few months on their cotton plantation in Mississippi. But I wearied of the dull, tedious life. The evenings were spent in regrets, reproaches, and recriminations. I managed to reach Philadelphia. A good old Quaker lady loaned me some money with which to manufacture artificial flowers. You know the war between England and France stopped the importation of French finery and our ladies were inconsolable. I made money from the first."

"I know," said Frederic, with a laugh, "that you owned a house and had a little fortune in the bank when I married you, all made with these little fingers," he added as he took her hand and pressed it, lover-like, to his lips. He went on: "Blennerhassett always said that Burr deceived him about his plans and made him a victim. You remember Wirt's speech?"

"That's not so!" cried Kate earnestly.

Her husband interrupted her: "Blennerhassett said that he had no idea or suspicion of Burr's intentions with regard to Texas and Mexico. He stoutly maintained, and most people believed, that he went into the scheme only to make money by the purchase, settlement, and sale of lands."

"That is not true," again cried Kate. "I had the

real facts from Mrs. Blennerhassett's own lips. Colonel Burr may not have disclosed all of his plans to Mr. Blennerhassett but I know that he kept nothing from his wife, and I further know that she told her husband everything. Let us sit down, Frederic, I am tired," and they seated themselves once more on the little grassy mound. She continued: "Mrs. Blennerhassett was an ambitious woman. She thought her husband, by his education, was fitted to shine in and adorn the highest circles. Her dream was that he should be a member of some regal court where he would be looked up to as a man of eminence. She entered heartily into Burr's schemes and, like him, she looked forward to the day when, possessed of wealth and power in the Southwestern country, her dreams in regard to her husband should be realized."

"How different were the decrees of Fate from her ambitious hopes," said Frederic. "Theirs is a sad story, is it not, Kate?"

"I have gone over it so many times in my own mind," said she, "that the whole seems like a lesson that I learned in school and have not forgotten. The Blennerhassetts were in Mississippi while Burr was in Europe. Mr. Blennerhassett wrote a letter to Mr. Alston threatening to publish a book which would injure him politically and socially unless he repaid, with interest, all the money he had loaned Colonel Burr."

"Blackmail?"

"Very near it," assented Kate. "Then they went to New York where they met Burr and demanded money from him. But he had none and was harassed with old debts. Mrs. Blennerhassett had some bank-stock which yielded her a small income. She went to Canada where, out of society, she could live economically and bring up her children. Her husband returned to Ireland to prosecute an old claim. He was beaten in court. He then tried to secure a position in

the Irish civil service but no person of influence would assist him. Next, he endeavored to convince a wealthy relative that he was the proper person to look after his estates but he received no reply to his letters. His final honest attempt to gain a livelihood was the starting of a private school for boys, but he got no encouragement."

"He deserves pity for his misfortunes," remarked Frederic.

"He became desperate," Kate continued. "He went to London and was connected with a questionable scheme to extort money from a member of the nobility. This completed his downfall. In his disgrace, an aged sister, having a small income, offered him a home on the Island of Guernsey. There he died and is buried."

"And his wife's fate?" asked Frederic.

"Was even sadder than his own," Kate replied. "Her money exhausted, she joined her husband in Ireland. She wrote poetry but it did not sell. To add to her misery, one of her sons became a confirmed drunkard and another had begun to tread the same downward path. She returned to America after her husband's death and presented a claim to Congress. It was not for money loaned to Colonel Burr, but for the unwarrantable destruction of her house on Blennerhassett Island. I think in time she would have obtained some money, but she fell sick. She was taken care of by the Sisters of a religious order. While you were out West, disposing of your property, I learned of her presence in New York and went to see her. She was overjoyed at my visit and what I have told you to-day I learned from her on her death-bed."

Frederic sprang to his feet: "It is high noon and I am getting hungry. I'll go down to the boat and get the basket and we will eat our dinner here."

While he was gone, Kate walked out to the end of the rocky promontory that extended into the river. It

was the same place where she had stood on the morning when Frederic first spoke of love to her. She looked across the river. What a change met her eye! Where, forty years ago, had stood farms and farm-houses could now be seen dwelling-houses, warehouses, and shops and stores built closely together, while broad streets and avenues had taken the place of rough country roads. She heard her husband's voice calling, "Kate! Come, Kate! Dinner's ready," and she hastily rejoined him.

The simple repast was soon disposed of. The empty space in the basket was soon filled with small branches taken from the trees which surrounded the little glade. Then Frederic took it down to the boat. While he was gone, Kate gathered a bunch of wild flowers and was standing, holding them idly in her hand, when her husband returned.

The stem of one of the wild flowers which she had tried to pick was very tough and it had resisted her first attempt. She dropped on her knees and grasped it close to the earth. As she did so, her fingers came in contact with some hard substance. She picked it up and looked at it. It was covered with mold. This she brushed off and wiped the coin, for a coin it proved to be, with her handkerchief. It was a piece of gold! Then the scene came back to her with redoubled force. When he reached her side, she showed it to her husband but said nothing. What would he say? He, in turn, said nothing but pressed her hand close upon the money—Burr's money—and, bending over, kissed her tenderly upon the forehead. All bitterness had vanished—the reconciliation was complete.

"You make me think of Ophelia in the play," he exclaimed.

"She was thinking of one whom she had loved and lost and so was I."

Her husband looked at her, inquiringly. He had

started to ask her what his name was but he saw she was in no mood for pleasantry and remained silent.

"I was thinking of poor Theodosia. Will her real fate ever be known to the friends who loved her so?"

"She was drowned at sea, without a doubt," said Frederic.

"Yes, I suppose that was her fate. How sad, poor girl, to lose her little boy whom she idolized and then, when on her way to meet her father who was so much more to her than fathers usually are, to come to such an untimely end. Poor Margaret Blennerhassett lies in a pauper's grave. Why do we call it by that homely and harsh-sounding name? I wish they would do here as in England—set apart a portion of the burying-ground for the poor and unfortunate and call it by the beautiful name that some Englishman has given it—God's Acre. Theodosia's husband never recovered from the shock caused by his wife's death and, four years later, joined his wife and child."

"They might all be living now," said her husband, "if it hadn't been for those rice swamps. Their health was undermined by malaria, that is the reason they were always weak and sickly. Our Newark marshes are about as bad but they are not wet all the time as rice swamps are."

"Where is General Hamilton buried?" asked Kate, apparently unmindful of what her husband had been saying.

"In Trinity churchyard," replied Frederic. "He wasn't buried in his native land, either."

"No; isn't it strange," remarked Kate, "that of all those whose names I would have engraven on my monument, only one died and was buried in his native land?"

"If Colonel Burr had died while he was in Europe," remarked Frederic, "it would have been stranger still."

"No, that could not be," cried Kate. "It was ordained that the wayward son should finally repose at the

feet of his learned father and godly mother, and I thank Heaven that it came to pass."

"Then you have nothing more to ask for your foster-father's sake?"

"One thing more," said Kate. "When I was staying at Judge Van Ness's house he showed me a sealed packet which he said belonged to Colonel Burr. He told me he knew its contents, but that the Colonel would not consent to their disclosure until fifty years had elapsed after his death. Judge Van Ness is dead and some one else has the packet—but who?"

"It will make little difference to us," remarked Frederic. "I don't imagine that either you or I will live forty-two years longer."

"No," cried Kate. "I wish I were but seventeen and you but twenty-one, for then we could hope to learn its contents. Oh! I wish I knew whether when its seals are broken it will secure for my foster-father a partial or complete vindication. I am weary, Frederic, let us row up the river."

When they returned, the sun was just sinking in the West. Great banks of clouds which had been thrown into most fantastic shapes filled the sky. There were great islands floating in the lofty azure; there were hills and mountain peaks; there were huge castles with battlemented towers and donjon keeps.

Frederic rested upon his oars and the boat drifted slowly towards the sea. A flood of rosy light irradiated the islands, the hills and mountains, and the old feudal castles. Then the hue changed to a deep red interspersed with bars of gold and orange. The sun sank beneath the horizon. A shadow seemed to fall, and the bright tints changed to graver blues and greens. Still lower sank the sun, and the sombre shades melted into vast piles of gray. The sun sank lower still, and, piled high on the western horizon were great masses shading from light to darkest brown.

"Night is coming on and it is getting cool, Kate, we must get home," said Frederic, as he caught up the oars and sent the boat forward, swiftly, with sturdy strokes.

Kate sat in the stern looking dreamily upward and holding the little bunch of wild flowers idly in her hands. Then she murmured something in a low voice.

"What were you saying, Kate?" asked her husband.

In a more distinct tone, she repeated pensively:

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave
Await, alike, the inevitable hour,—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

The Epilogue .... Mysteries Unveiled

CHAPTER XXXVI

"IN THE NAME OF AARON BURR!"

TUESDAY, *June* 1, 1886.

Yesterday I completed my book with a quotation from Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard." That poem has always seemed to me to establish a closer connection between the mundane and the unseen than any other similar work. It is replete with beauties and truths. It is an epitome of human life, here, and the spiritual life hereafter. To me, an author, the completion of a book is of enough importance to warrant a record being made of the fact in this—my journal of passing events.

Whether a man's memory be good or poor, I think the keeping of a diary is an advantageous mental exercise. Even the best minds are apt to forget apparently inconsequential dates and incidents which may afterwards become of supreme importance. But in such writing, I do not believe in being held down by any arbitrary standard. When one has said what he wishes to say, he should not try to say any more. Aaron Burr's journal of his exile in Europe is a model in diary construction. All should read it. I do not believe in the slavish habit of opening the entry for each day with a description of the weather and the height attained by the thermometer. Let meteorologists attend to that business. I remember reading an old diary which I found in an obscure corner of a garret. It was kept by a young man who had visited a physician and had some medicine prescribed for him in the shape of pills. For a period of more than three months, the entries in his diary closed uniformly with the words "Took a pill and went to bed."

WEDNESDAY, *June* 2.

I wrote yesterday that my book was completed, but that self-congratulation was somewhat premature. The book, it is true, is completed, but it is not finished. I knew that Col. Burr gave to Judge Van Ness a sealed packet, with the written injunction that it was not to be opened or its contents made public until fifty years had elapsed after his death. From the descendants of Judge Van Ness, I have learned that the packet was returned to Col. Burr. It was not discovered among his papers at his death and must have been given by him to someone else; but to whom? Then, again, the absolute facts concerning the death of Theodosia Burr Alston are unknown. The generally accepted opinion is that the vessel upon which she sailed from Charleston foundered at sea and she was drowned. There have been rumors that the vessel was captured by pirates and she was made to walk the plank. Others have believed that she was made captive by the pirates and experienced an even worse fate than death. Shall I allow myself to be tormented with speculations about these matters, or, become philosophical, and, admitting them to be unknowable, worry no more about them? This afternoon, I became of a practical turn of mind. I visited all the principal book-stores to see if any new works had been published which could throw any light upon these subjects. Result, *nil.*

THURSDAY, *June* 3.

I devoted the entire day to groping in musty cellars and dusty book bins for any treasure in the shape of a second-hand book, from which I might, possibly, glean the information of which I was in search. I found nothing new, but I did find some books and pamphlets which corroborated certain points which I had considered to be true. I was glad, of course, to know that my statements could be re-enforced by additional authorities, but I found nothing bearing directly upon the two points which I have mentioned. The twin secrets seemed to be impenetrable. After supper, I came to the sudden conclusion to visit New York. There, I said to myself, I may possibly find that of which I am in search. It will do no harm to try.

SATURDAY, *June* 5.

Spent yesterday and to-day in the new and second-hand book-stores in a vain quest for information which, evidently, is not in

print. As I had done in Boston, I found some valuable old pamphlets and one or two rare books.

MONDAY, *June* 7.

Yesterday I went to church. I do not remember the text, but the gist of the sermon was—there were some things that it were useless for man to try to accomplish unaided; that they require the infinite power of the Almighty to solve or bring them to perfection. This sermon threw me into a line of thought which led me to determine that but one more day should be spent in what seemed an apparently useless undertaking.

TUESDAY, *June* 8.

Fortune smiled upon me yesterday. In one of the second-hand book-stores, I found the proprietor most genial and obliging. He inquired the object of my search and I told him I was looking for information concerning Aaron Burr and his daughter Theodosia, Alexander Hamilton, James Wilkinson, Harman Blennerhassett and his wife, Margaret. Mr. Cleaves informed me that there was a gentleman living in New York who, for many years past, had given the dealers *carte blanche* to send him any book or pamphlet relating to those individuals that came into their possession, allowing them to fix their own price. Mr. Cleaves said he had a fine library but, so far as he knew, had never written a book. He offered to give me a letter of introduction, which I gladly accepted. It was directed to Col. Justus Dane, the address being that of a Fifth Avenue mansion. Col. Dane was just going out for a drive, but made an appointment with me for last evening at seven o'clock.

The conversation was largely personal—that is, Col. Dane told me about himself. With his permission, I made copious entries in shorthand in my note-book, a few of which I transcribe here. He has been paralyzed in his lower limbs for the past six years and his only means of locomotion is a roller chair. He was born on July 11, 1804, the day upon which the duel between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton took place. By the death of his father, who was a ship merchant, he inherited great wealth. His property consisted principally of real estate and the care of it was a great annoyance to him. When about twenty-one years of age, he became acquainted with Aaron

Burr, whom he had been advised to consult in relation to the conveyancing and leasing of some real estate property. They became intimately acquainted, and Col. Dane was at Burr's bedside when he died.

He called attention to his library, which consisted principally of works relating to Aaron Burr and those public men whose lives were contemporaneous. He had a collection of pictures, miniatures, and mementos of Burr and his friends. He told me that he had read all the books and from his notes had written out a number of manuscripts which, in reality, formed a life of Aaron Burr. He offered to read the manuscripts to me, and I have another appointment with him for to-morrow evening.

He related a most exciting incident about Aaron Burr. When the news came that Gen. Sam Houston had defeated the Mexicans at San Jacinto, Col. Dane went, as soon as possible, to Port Richmond to inform Burr of the fact. Burr raised himself in bed and fixing his marvellous eyes on Col. Dane, cried: "I told you so! My great misfortune has been that I have lived before my time. The day will yet come when the same party that politically ostracized me will conquer Mexico and grasp a mightier domain than I ever contemplated acquiring for my empire."

Col. Dane went as a private during the Mexican War. I will tell his story in his own words.

"When the United States declared war against Mexico, I enlisted as a private in one of the southern regiments. I could have obtained a commission but I wished to work my way up. I am at heart a great coward, but I convinced myself that, for the time being, I was the personal representative of Aaron Burr; that in me his spirit was reincarnated, and I determined to do my duty as he would have done under similar circumstances. I sought every opportunity that would bring me into close contact with the enemy. My companions told me something of which I was not cognizant myself,—that throughout the campaign I was guilty of the most reckless bravery. It bore fruit, for before we reached the city of Mexico I had been promoted to the position of brevet-colonel.

"When we entered the fallen capital which had once been the home of the Montezumas, I begged to be allowed to hoist 'Old Glory'—the sign of capitulation. Permission was granted

me, and as the flag reached the top of the pole, my feelings so long kept in suspense over-mastered me, and I cried out in a loud voice, *In the name of Aaron Burr!* My brother officers who surrounded me, overheard and looked at me in astonishment, but I made no explanation. I was satisfied."

CHAPTER XXXVII

JUSTUS DANE'S REMARKABLE MANUSCRIPTS

THURSDAY, *June* 10.

I passed last evening with Col. Dane and listened to the reading of his manuscript entitled "Lord Chesterfield's Letters." I did not think that I had any right to take notes from his reading and so refrained. One point that he made, however, was so novel that I am going to jot it down from memory. He considered Colonel Burr to be an exemplification of Chesterfieldian thought and action and he advanced the idea that Burr, in the education of his daughter Theodosia, aimed to make her—a young gentlewoman—as near like a young gentleman as possible. In support of this idea, he presented incidents and arguments which were most interesting.

SATURDAY, *June* 12.

Another delightful time last evening listening to Col. Dane's reading of his manuscript relating to Colonel Burr's Military Exploits. Brought together in this manner, Burr's military life assumed more the character of a rounded career. Col. Dane dwelt especially upon the fact that in every engagement where Burr was in supreme command, he was victorious, notwithstanding oftentimes disparity in numbers. On one occasion, Burr, with thirteen soldiers, destroyed a blockhouse and captured twenty-eight British regulars, without losing a man. How disgusted they must have been when they looked upon the beardless stripling and his force, numbering less than half their own.

TUESDAY, *June* 15.

Burr's Legal Life and Services was the subject of Col. Dane's manuscript last evening. He referred to Burr's great success as a lawyer, especially to his recognized ability in condensing evidence. Col. Dane thought that Burr made a great

mistake in not accepting a seat upon the bench, when it was offered by Gov. George Clinton. Clinton was a political enemy, but he was too honest a man not to admit Burr's judicial qualifications.

THURSDAY, *June* 17.

Col. Dane and I celebrated the one hundred and eleventh anniversary of the Battle of Bunker's Hill by considering his manuscript relating to Burr's Political Career. It contained numerous references to Alexander Hamilton and brought forward a great quantity of material which, to my knowledge, had never been presented in print. As he finished reading it, Col. Dane said, proudly, "That manuscript is my *chef d'œuvre*."

SATURDAY, *June* 19.

Last evening, two manuscripts kept our attention, and, in order to complete them, our sitting was prolonged, at the Colonel's request, until midnight. I protested against his thus overworking himself, but he declared that he had marked out a plan of action and he proposed to follow it, whatever the consequences might be. The two manuscripts were the fifth, relating to his Married and Social Life, and the sixth which had the comprehensive title "His Friends, His Foes, His Biographers and Critics."

In that part of the sixth manuscript relating to Burr's foes, Col. Dane devoted much space to contrasting the characters of Burr and Hamilton. When he had finished reading, Col. Dane asked, "Do you think that I have judged Hamilton too harshly? If so, listen to this opinion, written by a man of sterling integrity, who had unexampled opportunities to consider and observe the subject of our discussion."

I took out my note-book and, pencil in hand, looked inquiringly toward him. He comprehended my meaning and nodded affirmatively. I transcribe his words which were uttered in an impassioned voice and, despite his sitting posture, were accompanied by the most effective gestures used by the experienced orator.

"The world never presented such a combination of greatness and of meanness, of apparent courage and of vile malignity, of high aspirings and of low hypocrisy. Shrewd, artful, and unscrupulous, there were no means he would not employ to

accomplish his ends—no tool too base to be used when its services were needful. Loose in his own morals, he criticised those of others with a severity no other antagonist ever equaled. Slander was his favorite weapon, and no one stood in his way who did not feel the venom of his tongue and pen."

The Colonel rested his head upon his hand and a look of weariness passed over his face. After a few minutes silence, I inquired: "What is your opinion of Blennerhassett?"

"The whole truth about him has never been printed," said the Colonel. "I think to most persons the reasons for his leaving England so suddenly are somewhat mysterious. I have discovered why he left his native land for America and why, when he returned home, he was received with such scant courtesy and lack of encouragement by his friends and relatives, but it would do no good to put it in print and I have not included it in my manuscript. I have, however, written it out at full length in another document.

"Bear in mind one thing," he continued, and, as he spoke, he lifted his forefinger warningly and shook it at me, "don't say a single word in your book to encourage the belief that Margaret Blennerhassett was anything but a pure and honest woman and devoted to her husband during his waning fortunes."

I assured him that my opinion of Mrs. Blennerhassett coincided with his own.

"I do not think," the Colonel continued, "that Harman Blennerhassett or his wife have been fortunate in their biographers. The generally received impression is that she died in a state of abject poverty, attended only by some Sisters of Charity and that she was buried in a pauper burying-ground. Now, I am not writing a life of Harman Blennerhassett, or that of his wife, but if I were, I should say that these statements were probably incorrect."

I expressed a desire to know the real facts of the case.

"I have from very good authority," the Colonel said, "that she hired a house in New York and paid the rent for it while she was awaiting the action of Congress on her claim. It was there that she sickened and died. Her two sons, Harman and Lewis, I am told, were at her bedside when she passed away. She was buried in the Emmet family lot, Thomas Addis Emmet being a great friend of the Blennerhassetts."

Col. Dane's somewhat mysterious remarks in relation to Blen-

nerhassett's true reason for leaving his native land piqued my curiosity; so I again reverted to the subject.

"I had always supposed," said I, "that Blennerhassett left Ireland because he feared that if he remained, he would become involved in the revolutionary struggle then impending."

"Not at all!" said Col. Dane, sententiously.

"I have so stated in my book," I added.

"Then you are wrong, totally wrong," he said, decidedly. "I see that you wish to know the whole truth. It was told to me about a year before he died, by Colonel Burr, but he exacted from me a promise that I would not speak of it to any one, unless the disclosure of the truth was first made by some member of the Blennerhassett family."

"Could you not make me a partner in that promise," I asked, realizing that I was making a desperate move, which, if unsuccessful, might impair my future relations with Col. Dane.

The Colonel mused for a moment, then he said: "As you have written a book relating to Blennerhassett, and, what most interests and pleases me, have defended Colonel Burr therein, I know of no one who has a better right to share the secret; but, as you suggest, you must first become a partner in my promise."

I gave him my word that the promise made by him to Colonel Burr should be kept sacredly by me.

"Then," said Col. Dane, as his voice fell to a whisper, "here is the true story of Harman Blennerhassett—the real reason why he left his native land so suddenly, and why he was not welcomed by relatives and former friends when he returned. *Margaret Agnew was the daughter of one of Harman Blennerhassett's own sisters!*"

I started back, astonished at the strangeness of this story.

"Yes," continued the Colonel, "*when Margaret Agnew was married to Harman Blennerhassett, she became the wife of her own uncle!* Don't forget your promise!"

MONDAY, *June 21.*

Since writing what I did last Saturday, the most important event in my life has taken place. I have not time or space, here, to write out a full account, but I shall take the first opportunity that presents itself to do so. The wildest inventions of romance could not have been more startling than my experiences during the past two days. When I entered Col.

Dane's library yesterday evening and found him sitting in his accustomed place, I expressed the hope that he had suffered no personal inconvenience from the late hour he had kept on the previous Friday.

"Not at all," the Colonel responded. "Notwithstanding the unusually late hour at which I went to bed, I got up earlier than usual. I reached my lawyer's office before he arrived. I told him I needed his services for the entire day. He demurred, said he was very busy, and wished to postpone my business until next week. For once in my life, at least, my impulse to do something overcame my usual inclination to do nothing. I insisted upon his giving me his entire time. I told him I would give him a check for five hundred dollars if he would postpone everybody else's business. In doing this I was prompted by an impulse that I cannot explain."

"Money talks," I remarked.

"That's so," assented the Colonel, "but in this case it obliged my lawyer to sit still and hear me talk. What I said, and what I did, you will learn one of these days. Perhaps it will be very soon."

As he said this, a look more nearly approaching one of sorrow than I had ever seen there before showed itself upon his face.

The subject of the last manuscript was Aaron Burr's religious belief, or, to adopt Colonel Burr's own words "The Next World: A Common Sense View of it Based upon our Experience in This." Before reading the manuscript, Col. Dane gave me the particulars of a long interview which he had with Col. Burr at the time the latter gave him the manuscript which contained the details of his religious theory.

I asked permission, which was granted, to take this down in shorthand, and shall use my notes in preparing the statement which it is my intention to make. About midway of the reading, Col. Dane summoned his private secretary and asked him to bring a small box from the safe. When Thorvald had retired, Col. Dane said, "There is no invention for the benefit of good men which is not used to some extent by evil-doers. Colonel Burr gave me this." He held up what appeared to be a small piece of stone.

"This," continued the Colonel, "is a French invention. Our English name for it is plastic cement." I took it in my hand

and examined it carefully. As I returned it, I remarked that its use was not suggested by its appearance.

"No," said the Colonel, with a laugh. "It looks and feels like a piece of stone, but when subjected to the proper degree of heat, it becomes soft like putty. Now, we will suppose that the letter of a friend or of an enemy, properly sealed and unopened, comes into your possession. You wish to learn its contents, but you do not wish the owner of it to know that you have examined it. You will see," remarked Col. Dane, "that I am now acting the part of an evil-doer. When the cement softens, you press it down upon some even surface, so as to smooth it, then, while still warm, you place it upon the seal which you wish to break and once more press down firmly and evenly. Then you remove the cement and allow it to cool. It will soon resume its original consistency of stone. Afterwards, to hide the evidence of your crime, you place sufficient sealing-wax upon the letter and, with your piece of stone, which has countersunk in it the exact counterpart of your friend's or enemy's seal, you impress upon the hot sealing-wax this same counterpart. The recipient of the letter sees nothing to awaken his suspicions and you thus escape detection."

While at dinner, Thorvald made some reference to Iceland. The Colonel's reply I have never forgotten. He said, "Thorvald is never weary of talking about his native land. He was a mere boy when he left it, but he has never forgotten his early impressions. In fact, I believe they have become more intensified than they would have been if he had remained at home. He was an orphan. I brought him home with me. I am much attached to Thorvald and I know he is to me, but I am sure that when my time comes and I am laid away to rest, his first inclination will be to return at once to the country where he was born. I don't blame him, mind you," he added, turning to me, "and if you can aid him at any time in carrying out this laudable ambition I hope you will do so." I assured him that I would. "I must thank you now," said the Colonel, "for, from the nature of the case, it will be impossible for me to do so after you have kept your promise."

Returning to the library, we engaged in general conversation. The Colonel's roller chair was wheeled to the centre of the room, so as to bring us into what seemed to be closer intimacy

of thought. I explained the object and scope of my book. Col. Dane related some very interesting anecodotes of his travels in Europe. Thorvald talked about Iceland and showed me many books relating to his native country, which Col. Dane's library contained. Suddenly the Colonel changed the line of conversation and reverted to the topics which had been uppermost in our minds during the past two weeks.

"Thorvald," said he, "please open the safe and get that porcelain miniature of Theodosia. Did you ever see anything more beautiful?" he inquired of me as Thorvald placed it in my hands. "I have sat for hours," he continued, "and gazed on that face. I have never married, but if I had been at any time during my life fortunate enough to have met a counterpart of Theodosia Burr, I should have thrown myself at her feet and have wooed her even more persistently than did that persistent young man, Joseph Alston, who won the original."

I went home soon after, for I could see that the long conversation had naturally wearied my host, although he would have been the last person to acknowledge it. His chair had been wheeled to its old position behind the library table. I thanked him for the pleasant evening I had enjoyed, and expressed my intention of returning to Boston on the following day. He asked me for my address, which I gave him, and we shook hands warmly. I looked back as I reached the door of the library, and saw that his gaze was fixed intently upon the miniature portrait of Theodosia that stood before him upon the library table. I shall never forget the look in his face.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

HOW THE SEALED PACKET BECAME MINE

MONDAY, *June* 21—continued.

Early this morning, I was awakened by a loud knock at my door. Opening it, Thorvald entered. I saw at once that something of more than ordinary importance had taken place. He told me the sad story in a few words. After my departure last night, Col. Dane had told Thorvald that he had some writing to do and that he did not wish to be disturbed before midnight. When the young man entered the room, he found that his employer, friend, and benefactor was dead. Thorvald told me that he had just come from the lawyer's office, for Col. Dane had instructed him, in case of his sudden death, to inform his lawyer at once. To my surprise, Thorvald told me that the lawyer wished to see me at his office at eleven o'clock.

As I was making my preparations to accompany him, I said to Thorvald, "Did the Colonel write as he proposed?"

"Yes," said the young man, and he took from his pocket a folded sheet, which he passed to me. I opened it and read. It was a poem, entitled "To Theodosia in Heaven."

After finishing the verses Col. Dane had evidently taken up his pen again to write the date, and to add his initials. The "J" was perfectly formed, but where the "D" should have been there was a large blot of ink. No doubt, at that moment, the final shock had come and the pen had dropped from his nerveless fingers.

WEDNESDAY, *June* 23.

I have had no opportunity, until this evening, to complete my account of the events which took place last Sunday and Monday. Accompanied by Thorvald, I went to the office of Mr. Tisdale, the late Col. Dane's lawyer. Here, a great surprise awaited me; I might say, several great surprises. Mr. Tisdale informed me that Col. Dane had made a new will the previous

Saturday and that he wished to see me because I was mentioned therein. His principal heir, of course, was Thorvald, but he left him only five thousand dollars in money, saying that inherited wealth stifled ambition and he preferred that Thorvald, and he knew that Thorvald would so prefer, should gain wealth and fame by his own exertions, rather than by inheritance. Besides the amount given Thorvald, he left bequests to distant relatives and to his valued servants; the balance of his property, both real and personal, excepting what he had left to me, he devised in trust to the King of Denmark, the Danish Representative at Reikiavik in Iceland, and to Mr. Thorvald Sigurdsson, to be used for the benefit of the people of Iceland. But his gift to me was a greater fortune, in my opinion, than that bestowed upon Thorvald's countrymen.

It included his books, manuscripts, mementos, pictures, and, wonderful to relate, the sealed packet which Aaron Burr had placed in the hands of Judge Van Ness, which the latter had returned to its original owner, which Burr had given to Col. Dane and which he, in turn, entrusted to my safe keeping until the time should come to break the seals and divulge its contents.

THURSDAY, *June* 24.

There were but few mourners gathered to listen to the funeral services. Col. Dane had virtually lived the life of a recluse, particularly during the last six years. He had formerly been a member of several prominent New York clubs, and a few of his old-time associates were present. Besides them, Lawyer Tisdale, Thorvald, the servants, and myself composed the little company. There was one noticeable fact connected with this funeral. No woman was present. Thorvald must have intuitively divined the dead man's admiration for Theodosia Burr. After obtaining my permission, for he knew the miniature was now my property, he placed it upon the mantelpiece in the room where the services were held. The lawyer informed me that Col. Dane had instructed the undertaker, he was a personal friend, to take his body to Salem, Massachusetts, and place it by the side of his father and mother who were buried there.

And thus died and was buried he, who, it will one day be found, was the most devoted, most loyal, and most serviceable friend that Aaron Burr ever possessed.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE

FRIDAY, *June 25.*

Thorvald came to my hotel to-day and brought me a large package containing the pictures and mementos which Col. Dane had left me. He also brought the priceless packet, the contents of which I shall be at liberty to examine in less than three months. The time is short, but how slowly it will pass away. Thorvald informed me that Col. Dane had made out a bill of sale of everything that he had bequeathed me, bearing date previous to the date of his will, and Lawyer Tisdale wished him to tell me that the books and manuscripts would be forwarded to my Boston address at once

I had a long talk with Thorvald. He had no precise plans formed and, when I proposed that he should accompany me to Boston and act for me in a similar capacity to that held by him with Col. Dane, he gladly assented and said he would complete his preparations so that he could accompany me to-morrow.

While walking down Broadway this morning, I met an old acquaintance, Sir William Golden, an English baronet. Our friendship began at the house of Mr. Timothy Appleton, who lives on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. Mr. Appleton was a Vermont farmer, with an inventive turn of mind, who had come to Boston and had made an independent fortune with his patent mouse-traps, stove lifters, egg-beaters, and washboards. He has two daughters—Gladys and Gwendolin—and as soon as words of greeting were interchanged, Sir William informed me that Gladys Appleton was to become his wife within the next fortnight.

He had come over on his steam yacht, the Rainbow. The wedding trip was to include Norway and Iceland, and Miss Gwendolin Appleton was to accompany her sister. He asked me what I had been doing and I told him about my book.

"I have an idea!" he cried, in his bluff, hearty way. "Make

one of our party. We shall be delighted to have your company. If I monopolize Lady Golden's society, you can talk to her charming sister."

I politely declined the invitation. Sir William demanded my reason. Then I told him about Col. Dane and the promise that I had made concerning Thorvald.

"Nothing could be better," cried Sir William. "Have him come, too. We are going to Iceland and it will be a great advantage for our little party to have with us a native of the country who can speak English." I gave him my Boston address and he promised to call upon me.

SATURDAY, *June* 26.

We left on the five o'clock train for Boston. On the way, I told Thorvald about Sir William's invitation and he was delighted at the prospect of so speedy a return to his native land. I shall be so busy making my preparations for the trip, that my journal entries are likely to be few and far between for some time to come.

THURSDAY, *July* 8.

There was a quiet home wedding yesterday at the Commonwealth Avenue house. The Rainbow has carefully threaded the intricacies of Boston harbor and, as I look out of my cabin window, I see that we are just passing the Outer Brewster. In short time we shall be at sea. Our first stopping place is Halifax, where Sir William has some friends belonging to the British army.

FRIDAY, *July* 9.

We are steaming along at a rapid rate. The Rainbow is so solidly built that one can walk her decks with more precision and comfort than the Boston sidewalks.

Let me present some pen pictures of our little party. First, Sir William Golden, hale, bluff, and hearty; he has blue eyes, light, curly hair, and a very florid complexion. He is a man of honor and his words, earnestly spoken, always carry conviction. Lady Golden is a petite American blonde; her eyes, too, are blue and her hair, I had almost said golden, but I refrain.

She is bright in manner, engaging in conversation, and has an infectious laugh. Her sister Gwendolin is an exactly opposite type, being a decided brunette, with dark hair and eyes, reserved in manner and statuesque in her poses. What a contrast she presents to Thorvald! He is more than six feet in height and fashioned in an heroic mold. He has a fair complexion, rosy cheeks, and large, bright, blue eyes. His hair is tawny, that shade peculiar to the Scandinavians. A moustache of the same color gives a strong manly look to the handsome face.

TUESDAY, *July* 20.

We touched at Halifax, but remained only a day. This morning we steamed up the Mersey with the purpose of refilling our coal-bunkers before starting for Norway, but we are not to go to Norway, at present. Sir William received letters from his partners in London, asking him if he could not go at once to Iceland. They wish him to take measures to increase the output of the sulphur mines owned by the company in that island

THURSDAY, *July* 22.

I have not referred before in my journal to something that has been going on under my eyes since the Rainbow left Halifax. Thorvald is evidently very much smitten with Miss Gwendolin, but his advances, so far as I can see, have met with but slight encouragement. Thorvald is not a flirt, or I might fancy that this love-making was undertaken only as a pastime to relieve the tediousness of the journey.

FRIDAY, *July* 23.

No, Thorvald is in dead earnest. We spent last evening upon the deck in the bright moonlight. Thorvald sang a song with guitar accompaniment, which so pleased Lady Golden that she asked for a copy of the words. He gave them to her this morning. This afternoon, chancing to go up behind Miss Gwendolin, I noticed that she was reading the words. But, hearing me approach, she folded up the paper and slipped it between the leaves of her book. How devious are the ways of love-making. No general is called upon to exercise more strategy than is shown by a persistent lover.

SATURDAY, *July* 24.

Capt. Jason Millett, in reply to an inquiry, informed me this afternoon that the prow of the Rainbow was turned towards *Ultima Thule*. "We are in the Gulf Stream," he said. "It can be recognized by its dark green color. Its temperature here, at the north of Scotland, is fully 70°. Here it separates, one branch going northeast to the coast of Norway and the other northwest to Iceland. If it were not for the Gulf Stream, the climate of Iceland would be as cold as that of Greenland."

MONDAY, *August* 2.

To-day we steamed into Faxa Fjord, the little bay at the head of which Reikiavik, the capital of Iceland, is situated. While sight-seeing, we are to take breakfast on the boat and return home to it at night.

SATURDAY, *August* 14.

From our arrival up to the present time, every moment not devoted to eating and sleeping has been spent examining the wonders of this truly wonderful island. Thorvald has been invaluable as guide and interpreter. To-day came a break in our festivities. Sir William wished to visit the sulphur mines and has gone thither on the Rainbow, accompanied by Thorvald, the ladies and myself having become the guests of the Danish Representative.

MONDAY, *August* 16.

Will wonders never cease! A startling event happened to-day, almost as miraculous in its nature as the bequest of the sealed packet to which it forms, as it were, a sequel.

I engaged Olaf Finssen, a fisherman, to go as my guide on a trip to Mt. Hecla. When we had proceeded but a short distance, his pony slipped and threw him, breaking his leg. With my assistance, he managed to remount and return home. I rode to Reikiavik and obtained the services of a surgeon. While in Olaf's hut, I spied something on a small shelf in a dark corner, which seemed out of place in connection with its surroundings. It was a champagne bottle. I took it up. It was so light, I knew it could not be filled with wine. Wiping the

dust from the cork with my handkerchief, I found that the top was covered with sealing-wax, upon which was stamped with a seal the letter "B".

An insatiable desire to possess that bottle seized me. Finssen said he could not give it to me, for it did not belong to him. His grandfather had found it floating in the water years ago. It had been given to his father and his father had given it to him. When the owner came for it, he could have it, he said. Then I determined upon an act of what I deemed justifiable strategy Appearing to notice the seal for the first time, I cried:

"Why, I know that seal! I know to whom it belongs! I know the person who uses that seal!"

"Then you will take the bottle to him?" asked Finssen.

"Yes," I replied, "but I know that he would not be willing to accept it unless he paid you for taking such good care of it for him for so many years."

"It has been no trouble," answered Olaf. "There is no reason why he should pay me for doing what has been no trouble."

I told him that I would see that the bottle was delivered to the proper person, and thanked him in the name of the owner for the care he had given it.

I took the bottle to my room. Then I sent one of the servants to get some cold water and some boiling water. He returned with the information that the cook would loan me some but she could not give it to me as water was very scarce. I accepted the loan and he soon returned with two small dishes, one containing the cold water and the other the hot. I did not wish to break the bottle in pieces, so I placed the bottom of it in the cold water, and then plunged it into the hot water. I heard a snap and knew that the bottom of the bottle had separated from the top. I turned the hot water in with the cold, holding the bottle in position, and then sent the water to the cook with my thanks, accompanied by a kroner for recompense. I told the servant that I wished to be alone, and then I examined the contents of the bottle. As I lifted the upper part from the base which had been separated from it, a roll of paper and two letters fell upon the table. I picked up one of the letters. It was addressed to Hon. Joseph Alston, Charleston, S. C. I was dazed, almost confounded. Finally, I sum-

moned courage to pick up the second letter, and my astonishment upon reading the superscription was greater than ever. It was directed to Col. Aaron Burr, New York. I examined the roll of manuscript; it was written in French. Although I did not speak the language, I could read it with considerable facility.

First, I opened the letter to Mr. Alston, noticing at the time that both letters were sealed with the same seal that had been used upon the cork of the bottle. The letter was in English. As I unfolded the sheet two half circlets of gold fell from it. I picked them up and looked at them. Upon one of them were the letters J. A. to T. B., 1801. A wedding ring! The meaning was explained when I read the letter. Then I opened the letter addressed to Col. Burr. It was in cypher. Quickly, I drew up my traveling bag and hunted through to see if I had kept a copy of a cypher found among Col. Dane's papers. Fortunately I had done so and the deciphering of the letter was easy. Then I unrolled the manuscript and read it from beginning to end; from the day when the ill-fated "Patriot" sailed from the port of Charleston, until the night when Theodosia accompanied Capt. Thaddeus, she knew not where. Where had she gone? Part of the mystery had been cleared up, but the part that remained was more impenetrable than ever.

CHAPTER XL

THE WRECK OF THE RAINBOW

SUNDAY, *September* 19.

Although I have made copious shorthand notes in my notebook, my journal has been neglected since the 16th of August. I cannot hope to write out here at length what has transpired during the past month, but I will endeavor to condense into a few salient sentences an epitome of the principal events. Sir William returned from his trip to the sulphur mines and we passed another fortnight in extended journeys into the centre of the island. On Friday, September 3, we started on our return trip. Thorvald accompanied us, his ostensible reason being to visit the King of Denmark in relation to the Dane legacy; but I knew there was a more potent reason in the shape of a passenger on the Rainbow.

The day after leaving Reikiavik, the sky became overcast. The next day, the rain fell in torrents, accompanied by a heavy wind, which soon became a gale, and later on, a veritable tempest. We were driven out of our course by its fury. On the morning of the 15th of September, Capt. Millett espied what appeared to be a land-locked bay, which, if we could reach, would become a haven of safety. Instead, the Rainbow ran upon some sunken rocks and became a total wreck. We were obliged to take to the boats and, after much difficulty, the passengers and crew were at last safe on shore.

As one of the boats was cast ashore by a huge wave, Thorvald was thrown from it violently and his head struck upon a rock. In times of danger and suffering, love speaks in no uncertain tones. It was so in this case, and during the five minutes that followed the accident, every member of our little party knew that Gwendolin Appleton loved Thorvald Sigurdsson as devotedly as he loved her.

But why look back with such regret, if the lives of all our party were saved? For this good and sufficient reason. As I

stood upon that forlorn beach, looking first at the wrecked Rainbow and then at its wrecked passengers and crew, who stood huddled together, without food or shelter, the thought came to me that this 15th of September was the day I had looked forward to upon which I could open the precious sealed packet and learn its contents, but the danger was so imminent that we had been obliged to leave the Rainbow in order to save our lives and no thought had been given, in that moment of peril, to our personal belongings. Now, it was too late. The storm increased in violence and the ill-fated yacht parted amidships and sunk beneath the waters of the bay.

Sir William has offered to bear the expenses for diving, in order to secure the lost packet, but I would not consent to such an outlay, for I doubt if it would be possible for us to even find the little bay in which the Rainbow had sunk.

MONDAY, *September 27.*

Sir William has just left me. When he came in, his face was beaming with pleasure. He told me that he had just met an old friend, the Duke of Hamilton, who had invited our party to go to his country house and stay as long as we pleased.

At first I declined. What good could I hope to gain from such a visit. I had lost all my treasures with the exception of my journal and note-book, which were, fortunately, in the pocket of the overcoat which I wore when we were obliged to leave the yacht. Then I thought of Thorvald whose injury had proved to be quite severe.

Should I be keeping my promise made to Col. Dane unless I remained near him until he was out of danger and on the road to sure recovery? At last I consented, and we shall soon leave our comfortable quarters which we have occupied in a Liverpool hotel for the past week.

CHAPTER XLI

THE DEATH OF THEODOSIA

THURSDAY, *September* 30.

We arrived yesterday at the Duke of Hamilton's country house. He has but few visitors at present, but by the first of October, the house will be crowded. The Duke's family physician says that Thorvald will suffer no permanent injury from his accident. What he most requires is rest and good nursing. He is sure to receive these, for Miss Gwendolin has hardly left his side since the accident.

As I was sitting this morning with the Duke in the library reading a newspaper, he looked up from the letter he was writing and said,

"Sir William has told me of the fate of your manuscripts and documents. I wish that I could compensate in some way for the loss that you have sustained, but the Hamilton family, although it has rendered service to the country, has done nothing of a very distinguished nature that I remember."

"Was there a member of your family by the name of Daniel Hamilton," I inquired, "who many years ago left Scotland and went to the West Indies?"

"I know to whom you refer," replied the Duke; "he was my grandfather's uncle. I have read about him and his son who, I understand, took a very prominent part in the American Revolution."

"What is your Christian name," I asked, "if I may presume?"

"Alexander," replied the Duke, "and that was my father's before me. He was a second son and began public life in the navy, but the death of his brother, of course, gave him the title."

"Was he engaged in the War of 1812?" I asked.

"No," replied the Duke, "he returned to England before that time. His principal service was rendered in chasing the pirates

who at that time infested the Spanish Main. He received his first promotion for causing the death of one of the most noted pirates of the time, a Captain Boncourt, I believe."

"What! Captain Thaddeus Boncourt?" I cried, for the thought immediately flashed into my mind that if the Duke of Hamilton's father had killed Captain Thaddeus he might have known or said something about the companion of his flight.

"Yes," continued the Duke, "and several days later the sloop-of-war Cygnet, to which he belonged, overhauled the pirate ship of which Boncourt was captain, and after a sharp fight captured her. He wrote home a long letter concerning the affair to my mother, to whom he was engaged before he left Scotland. His elder brother died in 1813, and he came home at once, married, and assumed the title."

"Are any of his letters in existence?" I anxiously asked.

"Certainly; my mother kept all of his letters. But why are you so interested?"

I explained to him the discovery that I had made while in Iceland; told him of the contents of the bottle and how much I had learned from them.

"You shall have the letter and read it for yourself," said the Duke, and, opening a cabinet, he extracted a package of old letters, and, untying them, passed one of them to me. "That is the one. I know it because it is so yellow."

I opened it with trembling hands. The letter was a very long one, and I transcribe only those portions in which I was particularly interested.

On the Spanish Main, Jan. 15, 1813.

My Dear Flora:

Since I last wrote you, a most exciting affair has taken place, and your Alexander, for whom you predicted fame, has taken the first step upon the ladder that leads to that high elevation. The Cygnet had come to anchor in a little bay on the north coast of Cuba. The night was very dark, but before it closed in our lookout reported that a strange craft was coming towards our hiding-place. I was ordered by the captain to take a boat and reconnoitre in order to learn, if possible, the position of the vessel. We were rowing along almost noiselessly, when suddenly our boat came into collision with another which we

had not seen. I had a dark lantern, and turning the light upon the boat I saw the face of a man; a most remarkable face. I knew it at once, for I had heard Captain Thaddeus Boncourt described by one who had met him. I immediately fired two shots at him.

But I must first explain that upon turning the light into his face, he leaped to his feet and jumped into the water, so that when I shot at him he was in the water and not in the boat. My second shot must have been fatal, for he threw up his hands and sunk. Then I made a discovery. I kept my light turned upon the water to see if he came to the surface again, when I saw something white floating there. Rowing up to it, we discovered that it was a woman who had evidently been in the company of the captain. She was taken into our boat and we started at once for the ship. Our surgeon was called and he rendered every assistance possible. Upon examination, it was found that one of my shots had struck her in the right side and inflicted what was undoubtedly a mortal wound. The surgeon endeavored to locate the bullet and extract it, but was unable to do so. We administered stimulants and she revived enough to open her eyes and utter two words in French; "*Mon père!*" We judged from this that Captain Thaddeus must have been her father, although we had never heard of his being married, or of his having any children. It is possible that she had visited him on board the pirate ship, and at the time of his death he was taking her ashore. There was nothing upon her person to indicate who she was, and only the two words in French "my father," that she uttered, supplied any clue as to her identity. She lingered until the next day and then succumbed to her wound. We buried her at sea, our chaplain performing the service, and all hands stood reverently by as the body was lowered into the water.

I was much shocked at the incident. The shooting, of course, was entirely unintentional on my part, and I pray Heaven to forgive me for being the innocent cause of her death.

I could read no more. The letter dropped from my hand.

"What is it?" asked the Duke.

"Only this," I answered, "this letter supplies the last evidence that I required to complete my story. The young woman whom your father shot, and who was buried at sea, was not

the daughter of Captain Thaddeus Boncourt, but Theodosia Burr Alston, the daughter of Aaron Burr."

The news of my discovery was soon communicated to Sir William, his wife, and the other members of our party. I could wait no longer, I must return at once to America. The desire to finish my book came upon me with redoubled force. I knew that I could no longer depend upon the services of young Thorvald, he was in better hands than mine, and so, bidding adieu to my kind friends, I made my way to Liverpool, secured passage upon one of the fast liners, and was soon on my way home.

CHAPTER XLII

THE IRONY OF FATE

FRIDAY, *December* 31.

Received a letter to-day from Sir William Golden informing me of the approaching marriage of Mr. Thorvald Sigurdsson and Miss Gwendolin Appleton. The wedding will take place next month and Mrs. Sigurdsson will accompany her husband to Iceland. The company of which Sir William is a director has engaged Thorvald to take charge of the sulphur mines in that island.

When Miss Gwendolin looked so coldly upon poor Thorvald during the cruise of the Rainbow, I imagined that it was her intention to catch either an earl, a marquis, or a duke, during her first London season. But Cupid must have fastened that love-song of Thorvald's to his arrow and the shot was fatal.

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SATURDAY, *December* 31, 1887.

Sir William Golden writes to me half a dozen times a year. He never forgets to send me a Christmas remembrance, accompanied by a long letter.

The hand of Fate plays wild pranks with us poor mortals. If I had not met Sir William Golden on Broadway, and Thorvald had not been my companion on the Rainbow, I should never have been able to record the following facts: Thorvald's son has been named Justus Dane Sigurdsson in honor of Iceland's great benefactor. Sir William Golden's son and heir will some day be known as Sir Burr Golden, while his twin sister may be announced at a Queen's Drawing-room as Lady Theodosia.

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MONDAY, *March* 4, 1901.

Last Saturday I completed the rewriting of my book. Sir William Golden, in one of his letters, expressed the hope that

the loss of the documents which went down with the Rainbow had not been wholly irreparable.

No, I do not think the loss of the sealed packet was irreparable. I remembered quite accurately the contents of Theodosia's journal and the letters written to her husband and father. I read again, very carefully, Mr. Dane's manuscripts, and noted his mention of the use of plastic cement as a means of opening and re-sealing letters so as to escape detection. I also noted the fact that he acknowledged receiving from Colonel Burr a sample of this cement. I have a suspicion which the lapse of time, I am afraid, will never eradicate, that all that the sealed packet contained, which could have been used for the vindication of Aaron Burr, and much more, is contained in Justus Dane's remarkable manuscripts.

I have read Col. Dane's manuscripts over and over again until I almost know them by heart. I have incorporated herein such incidents as seemed pertinent to the plot, and illustrative of the action of my story, and have retained the remainder of his writings for future use in a manner as nearly in conformity to the desire expressed by him in his last will and testament as possible.

One closing thought which could not have been contained in the sealed packet. How could the irony of Fate be more forcibly portrayed than by the twin facts that Aaron Burr killed an Alexander Hamilton by a shot in the side, and that another Alexander Hamilton, a scion of the same family, also by a shot in the side, gave a mortal wound to Theodosia Burr, his idolized daughter.

To-day is Inauguration Day at Washington. I attended church yesterday and the clergyman took for his text a passage which related to the actions of kings, princes, potentates, and other rulers of men. It was natural, of course, that he should refer to those illustrious men who had presided over the fortunes of the great American republic; and I suppose it was perfectly natural, for he undoubtedly imbibed the idea in school, that he should single out Aaron Burr from among his contemporaries and refer to him in terms synonymous with murderer and traitor.

I have been looking over one of Col. Dane's manuscripts. I came across a paragraph which I should like to have that clergyman read, for I am sure it would act as an antidote to the

poison implanted in his infant mind so many years ago. It runs thus:

"When we consider the deceitful friendship and systematic treachery of Wilkinson; the personal spite shown by Thomas Jefferson, and the official persecution initiated and pushed forward by him; the covert plots and the secret correspondence; the inspired newspaper articles and pamphlets, and the malignant political opposition of Alexander Hamilton; the cowardly weakness, inborn vacillation, and unsuspected duplicity of Blennerhassett, and the relentless animosity of such men as Cheetham, Armstrong, Russell, and McRae,—Burr, with all his faults, shines like a radiant star amid such dark surroundings. The wonder is that with such environment, considering his temperament, losses, and privations, he was so good a man in so many ways as he is shown to be."

In another of Col. Dane's manuscripts I found the following declaration and prophecy:

"Col. Burr assured me in the most positive terms that in his scheme for the conquest of Mexico there was no feature in any way inimical to the geographical integrity and sovereignty of the United States. Burr was a proud man. He realized that he had lost the confidence of the people and was ostracized socially and politically. Jefferson had gained great credit for the diplomatic tact shown in gaining possession of the great territory of Louisiana by purchase instead of a sanguinary war. Burr wished to parallel this achievement and thus regain the esteem and favor of his countrymen. But his genius was military. He relied upon a great military *coup,* the conquest of Texas and Mexico. When subjugated, it was his intention to present the fruits of his conquest to the American Union anticipating, as a return for the gift, popular acclaim and a restoration of all his old rights and privileges.

"If Burr had been allowed to carry out his original plan, there would have been no war between the United States and Mexico. If Burr's ideas in relation to the abolition of slavery had been adopted, there would have been no Civil War. Should a man who was so far-seeing, and whose plan, if adopted, would have saved his country so many lives and so much treasure, be longer classified with murderers and traitors? Should not the writers of school-books and biographical dictionaries omit these words which they have so long used in connection with the name of

Aaron Burr? Should not Wirt's celebrated speech, it was rhetoric and nothing more, for it had no basis of fact, be expunged from our school reading-books?

"It is not improbable that before the one hundredth anniversary of the duel at Weehawken Heights arrives, that the friends of AARON BURR, in all parts of the country, will assist in erecting in Newark, New Jersey, the city of his birth, some lasting testimonial to signify their appreciation of his worth as a patriotic soldier, a learned lawyer, a far-seeing politician, and a devoted father."

THE END

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